2023 TEAM YEARBOOK

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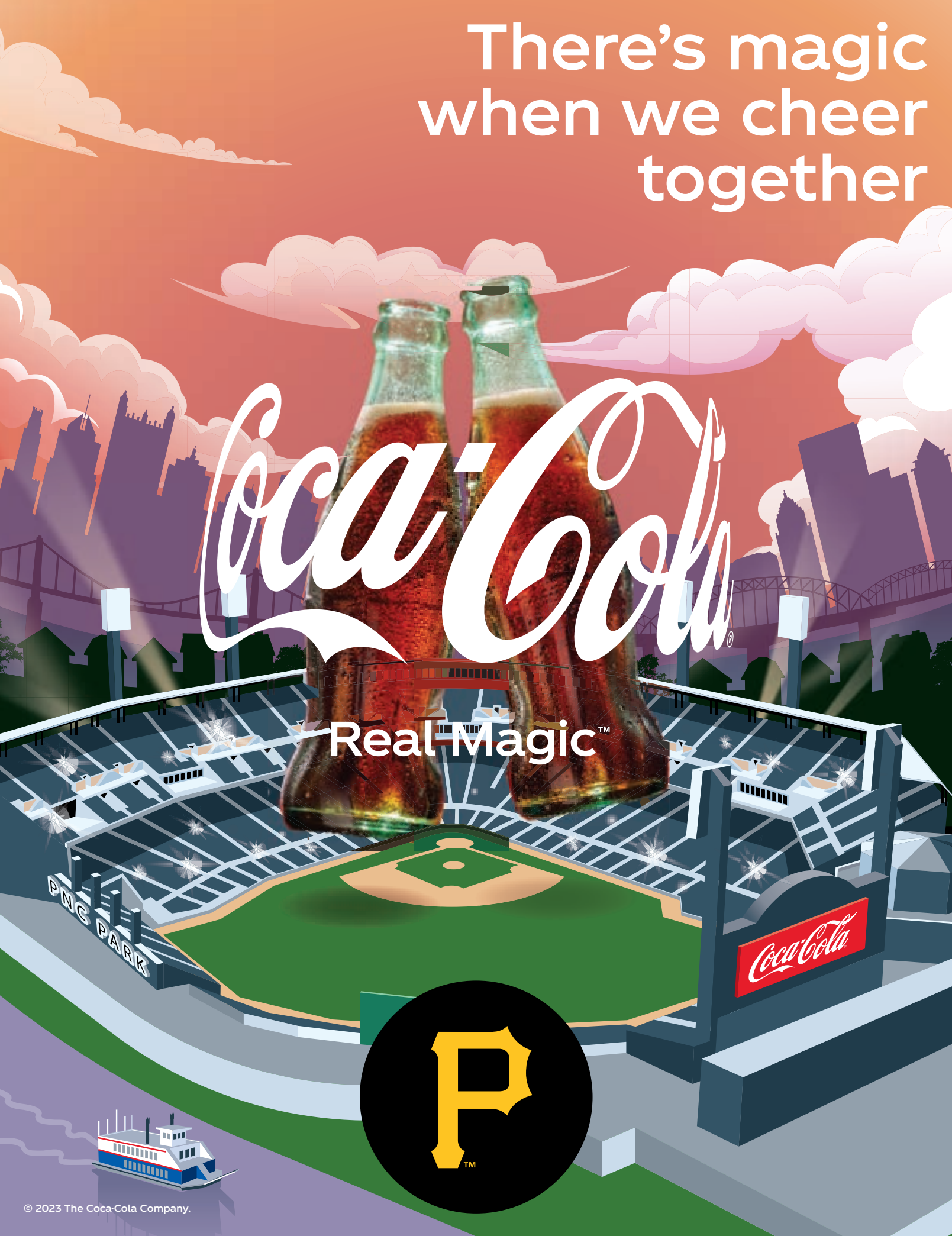
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STAFF

EDITORIAL
Jim Lachimia (JFL Resources)
Brian Warecki

DESIGN
Rachel Whitlinger
David Sharpensteen
Will Wyss
Amy Monks

CONTRIBUTORS
Dan Hart
Jim Trdinich
Patrick Kurish
Melissa Strozza

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP
John Bray
Katie Shockey
Alyssa Strone

TEAM PHOTOGRAPHER
Harrison Barden

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY
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Executive V.P. Operations: Jeff Botwinick
Executive V.P. Business Development: Martin Lewis
Executive V.P. Sales: Mitch Gibbs
Executive V.P. Team Relations: Dave Gerschwer
Executive V.P.: Julie Wanjon
Publishing Director: Jaime Ziegler
Production Manager: Will Kilcommons

2023 SCHEDULE

MARCH & APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26	27	28	29	30 CIN 4:10	31	1 CIN 4:10
2 CIN 1:40	3 BOS 7:10	4 BOS 7:10	5 BOS 1:35	6	7 4:12	8 6:35
9 1:35	10 6:35	11 6:35	12 12:35	13 STL 7:45	14 STL 8:15	15 STL 2:15
16 STL 2:15	17 COL 8:40	18 COL 8:40	19 COL 3:10	20 6:35	21 6:35	22 6:35
23 1:35	24	25 6:35	26 6:35	27 12:35	28 WSH 7:05	29 WSH 1:05
30 WSH 1:35						

MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 TB 6:40	3 TB 6:40	4 TB 1:10	5 6:35	6 6:35
7 1:35	8 6:35	9 6:35	10 12:35	11	12 BAL 7:05	13 BAL 7:05
14 BAL 1:35	15	16 DET 6:40	17 DET 1:10	18	19 6:35	20 4:05
21 1:35	22 6:35	23 6:35	24 12:35	25	26 SEA 10:10	27 SEA 4:10
28 SEA 4:10	29 SF 5:05	30 SF 9:45	31 SF 3:45			

JUNE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2 7:05	3 4:05
4 11:35	5 7:05	6 7:05	7 12:35	8	9 7:05	10 4:05
11 1:35	12	13 CHC 8:05	14 CHC 8:05	15 CHC 8:05	16 MIL 8:10	17 MIL 4:10
18 MIL 2:10	19 7:05	20 7:05	21 12:35	22 MIA 6:40	23 MIA 6:40	24 MIA 4:10
25 MIA 1:40	26	27 7:05	28 7:05	29 12:35	30 7:05	

JULY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 4:05
2 1:35	3 LAD 10:10	4 LAD 9:10	5 LAD 10:10	6 LAD 10:10	7 ARI 9:40	8 ARI 4:10
9 ARI 4:10	10 ALL STAR BREAK	11	12	13	14 7:05	15 7:05
16 12:05	17 7:05	18 7:05	19 12:35	20	21 LAA 9:38	22 LAA 9:07
23 LAA 4:07	24 SD 9:40	25 SD 9:40	26 SD 4:10	27	28 7:05	29 7:05
30 1:35	31					

AUGUST

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 7:05	2 12:35	3 MIL 7:15	4 MIL 8:10	5 MIL 7:10
6 MIL 2:10	7 7:05	8 7:05	9 7:05	10 12:35	11 7:05	12 7:05
13 1:35	14 NYM 7:10	15 NYM 7:10	16 NYM 1:10	17	18 MIN 8:10	19 MIN 7:10
20 MIN 2:10	21 7:05	22 7:05	23 12:35	24 7:05	25 7:05	26 7:15
27 1:35	28 KC 8:10	29 KC 8:10	30 KC 8:10	31		

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 STL 8:15	2 STL 7:15
3 STL 2:15	4 6:35	5 6:35	6 12:35	7	8 ATL 7:20	9 ATL 7:20
10 ATL 1:30	11 6:35	12 6:35	13 6:35	14 12:35	15 6:35	16 6:35
17 1:35	18	19 CHC 7:40	20 CHC 7:40	21 CHC 7:40	22 CIN 6:40	23 CIN 6:40
24 CIN 1:40	25	26 PHI 6:40	27 PHI 6:40	28 PHI 6:05	29 6:35	30 6:35
1 3:05						

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PIRATES STRIVE FOR IMPROVEMENT BY BLENDING VETERAN NEWCOMERS WITH TEAM'S ESTABLISHED PLAYERS AND EMERGING YOUNG TALENT

by Jim Lachimia

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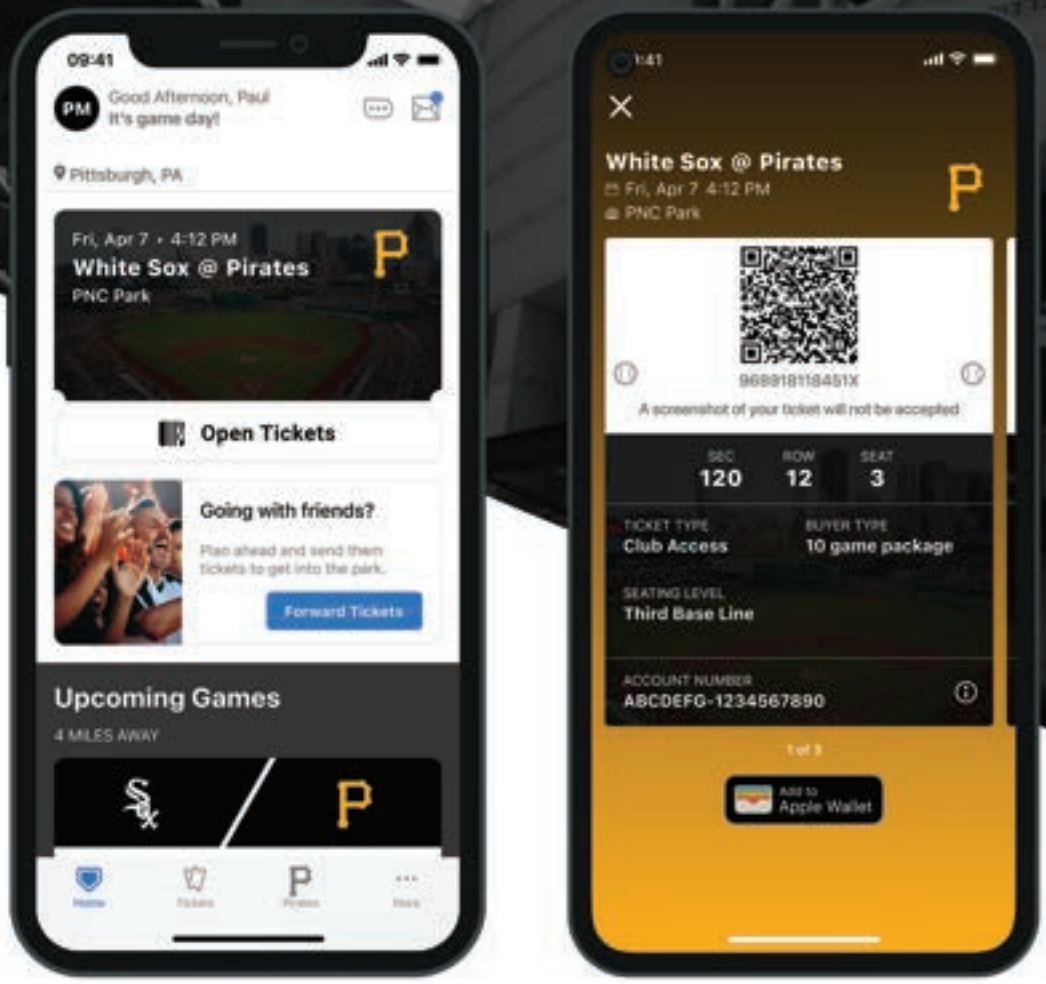

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The Pirates squad that left Florida in late March and headed North to open the 2023 season looked a lot different than the one that closed out the 2022 campaign last October. A series of offseason moves that brought in veteran players saw to that.

The transaction that drew the most attention was signing free-agent outfielder Andrew McCutchen, who was a five-time All-Star and a National League MVP during his first stint with Pittsburgh. Other experienced players who were acquired include first basemen Carlos Santana and Ji Man Choi, catcher Austin Hedges, starting pitchers Rich Hill and Vince Velasquez, and reliever Jarlín García. Another newcomer is outfielder Connor Joe, who isn't quite as seasoned as the rest of the group.

The game plan is to blend the veteran newcomers in with established performers such as outfielder Bryan Reynolds, third baseman Ke'Bryan Hayes, and pitchers Mitch Keller and David Bednar — plus emerging players like infielders Oneil Cruz and Rodolfo Castro, outfielder Jack Suwinski and pitcher Roansy Contreras.

The goal is to create a deeper and more potent lineup and a more balanced and formidable starting rotation and bullpen.

"We felt coming into the offseason that we were at a point where there's enough traction with the young players that it was the right time to start adding some experience back to the team — for two reasons," Pirates General Manager Ben Cherington said. "One, to lengthen our lineup and try to give us more consistent at bats one through nine. To create more options to fill out the lineup and make it a tougher lineup to pitch against. We think we've built a deeper lineup, and we certainly hope it plays out that way.

"And then the second reason is that we want everybody, whether they're a younger player or an older player, to come to the ballpark with an expectation that we're going to prepare to win that night. We want to put our focus on that, and it can help to have a few more guys that have had more reps doing that as professionals and know how to do that in a major-league environment."

Cherington and manager Derek Shelton maintain that the Pirates targeted veterans capable of making significant contributions, not just players with experience.

"That's an important point. We always start there," Cherington said. "That's what we're identifying first is a belief that guys can help us on the field, help us win games, can contribute to games, can contribute to wins. Then other things like experience and influence on others, filling a specific role on the team, etc., are layered in after that. But the first thing that we always look at is where this player is now, what we believe the performance will be, and how that helps us on the field."

"At no point did we bring in any of these guys just because they were veterans," Shelton added. "We brought in players that we felt functionally fit our ballclub, whether it's on the mound or in our lineup, to make us better. That was the thing we looked at first. Number one, how they were going to fit in on our club. And then number two, how they were going to fit into our culture. We feel like we were able to acquire good major-league players that have experience."

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McCutchen, who is now 36 years old, batted .237 with 17 homers and 69 RBI in 134 games for the Milwaukee Brewers in 2022. Although he started more often at designated hitter (82 games) than in the outfield (49 games) a year ago, the Pirates do indeed plan to have him see action at the corner outfield spots.

"More than likely, this would not have been the right fit if it was just to DH," Cherington said. "Part of what we were interested in was that he can still play the outfield. The information that we had indicated that he was still a positive outfielder. We expect to see him out there a bunch."

Hill, who turned 43 years old on March 11, remains effective thanks in part to one of baseball's most impressive curveballs. Last season, he went 8-7 with a 4.27 ERA in 26 starts for the Boston Red Sox. Hill has enjoyed many fine moments during his 18-year career and was particularly effective from 2016-2018 when he compiled a 35-18 record in 70 games (69 starts) for the Oakland Athletics and Los Angeles Dodgers.

He will be the oldest player in the majors this year, a few months older than San Diego Padres designated hitter Nelson Cruz, who will turn 43 on July 1. However, Hill still loves to compete, he still loves the game, and he knows he can still achieve good results.

"Austin's an unbelievable receiver and a guy who caught a really good young Cleveland pitching staff over the past couple years," Shelton said. "The framing metrics and the receiving metrics are something that really stand out, and that was important to us."

The left-handed García has made more than 50 relief appearances four times in six years in the majors, including the past two seasons with the San Francisco Giants. Two years ago, he was 6-3 with a 2.62 ERA in 58 games for a Giants squad that registered 107 victories and captured the N.L. West title.

The right-handed Velasquez spent time as a starter and a reliever for the Chicago White Sox in 2022, but the bulk of his experience over the years has been as a starter, and that's what the Pirates signed him to do. He spent most of his eight big-league seasons with the Philadelphia Phillies, making 183 appearances (136 starts), and has always had good stuff and good strikeout numbers (785 in 726.1 innings).

The team's finest returning player is Reynolds. The 28-year-old switch-hitting outfielder has batted better than .300 twice in his four seasons as a Pirate. The first time was in 2019 (.314) when he was one of the league's top rookies. It also happened in 2021 (.302), the year he started in center field for the N.L. squad at the MLB All-Star Game.

Last year, Reynolds hit .262 in 145 games and led the Pirates in runs scored (74), hits (142), home runs (27), RBI (62) and OPS (.806). In early December last year, a story broke that he had requested a trade. However, the team values his services greatly and he remains in black and gold.

"I've said before and I'll say again, we love Bryan," Cherington stated in early February. "He's a terrific player. He plays the game the right way. He's a huge part of our team and we're looking forward to getting him to spring training and continuing to support him.

"From time to time in this game there can be disagreements and we want players to have the forum to come and express themselves and tell me whatever they're feeling — including if they may disagree with something. It's a healthy part of a relationship between a player and a team. "But again, we're happy Bryan's a Pirate. We love him as a player, and we respect him so much. We're looking forward to continuing to see him out there in a Pirates uniform."

Shelton echoed the GM's sentiments by saying:

"Bryan is such a solid baseball player. You talk about the offense. You talk about the defense. You talk about the way he runs the bases. There are just so many things that he does fundamentally sound. Then on top of that there's how he attacks the game. Bryan stands out because of how he plays the game. We look forward to him having a strong season."

It's interesting that Reynolds and McCutchen figure to spend time in the same outfield since Bryan was the key player the Pirates received in return when Andrew was traded to San Francisco prior to the 2018 season. Reynolds has referred to the deal as the event that "really kick-started my chance to break into the big leagues."

Reynolds and McCutchen had never met before arriving at spring training this year, but ramped up getting to know each other in Bradenton by having lockers next to each other and spending a lot of time in the same hitting group during BP.

"Andrew's just a good guy," Reynolds said. "He plays the game hard and the right way. I'm excited to get to know him better and get to play with him."

"All that outside noise (reports of contract negotiations and potential trades), you don't want that to get in the way of what you do on the field," McCutchen said. "Hopefully, I'll be able to help Bryan with that to where he can just focus on being a good player, an All-Star and whatever else he knows he can do. Let's just go out and play together and try to win some ballgames."

One of this spring's most uplifting stories involved Keller. The 27-year-old righthander was one of the Pirates' most heralded prospects of the past 10 or 15 years, but he stumbled early in his major-league career.

Adding a sinker to his offerings last May helped Keller become a much more effective pitcher. He posted a 2.71 ERA in his final 15 starts of 2022 and wound up leading the staff in starts (29) and innings pitched (159.0), while finishing second in strikeouts (138).

> **"BUT THE FIRST THING WE ALWAYS LOOK AT IS WHERE THIS PLAYER IS NOW, WHAT WE BELIEVE THE PERFORMANCE WILL BE, AND HOW THAT HELPS US ON THE FIELD."**
>
> BEN CHERINGTON

"I've used those three things as lines of demarcation in this game," Hill said. "If one of those three things aren't happening, it's time to go. But the competition, I love. The passion is still there, and I'm still putting up good numbers."

The switch-hitting Santana and left-handed-hitting Choi are both slated to see action at first base and designated hitter. Santana, 37, has 278 homers on his big-league resume and twice hit 34 in a single season for Cleveland. Choi, 31, enjoyed his finest year in 2019 when he hit .261 with 19 homers and 63 RBI in 127 games for the Tampa Bay Rays.

The Pirates were delighted to sign Hedges, who they consider one of the best defensive catchers in the game. The 30-year-old has eight years of major-league experience with the Padres (2015-2020) and Cleveland Guardians (2020-2022). Last year, he started 97 games behind the plate for the American League Central champions.

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His second-half surge combined with a fine offseason led to Shelton naming Keller the Pirates' starter for the March 30 season opener against the Cincinnati Reds at Great American Ball Park.

"The game requires us to make changes. It asks us, 'Are you in?'" Pirates pitching coach Oscar Marin said. "That process let Mitch know, 'This is who I am now.' And you saw that confidence in Mitch last year. He's a confident major-league starting pitcher right now."

"No prospect ranking will ever get you prepared for the big leagues — what it is and how hard it is," Keller said. "That's why this is the top and there's no level above it. It does take some time, and none of us ever have it figured out completely. We're trying to learn and do better every day. But I feel good."

The Pirates' most talked about young player is Cruz, whose tools — hitting for power and distance, arm strength and running speed — are among the finest in baseball. After being promoted from Indianapolis (AAA) on June 20 last year, the 24-year-old left-handed hitter batted .233 with 34 extra-base hits (13 doubles, four triples, 17 homers) and 54 RBI in 87 games and made 77 starts at shortstop.

At 6-foot-7, he's uncommonly tall for the position, but the Pirates believe he has the skills and the commitment to remain there.

"We're talking about an NBA-size player who's playing in baseball and that's not easy to do," Shelton said. "To do that in the middle infield, there are a lot of things that have to sync up. Because he's a fluid athlete he's able to do it. The desire to continue to work on that fluidity and improve it is something he definitely has, and that's really important too. It takes a lot to get that body in sync.

> **WE'RE TALKING ABOUT AN NBA-SIZE PLAYER WHO'S PLAYING IN BASEBALL AND THAT'S NOT EASY TO DO.**
>
> DEREK SHELTON

"He does things that blow the charts away and people want to talk about that. But the thing that stands out to me with Oneil is how much better his plate discipline got later in the season, how coachable he was, and his thirst to get better. That was a good thing for us in August and September and it will be moving forward. The things we challenged him on we were not only starting to see him take into practice, but also into the games."

The Pirates aggressively acquired veteran players over the winter, but the recipe for improving as a team absolutely includes younger players getting better. And it's more than reasonable to believe that can happen. The possibilities are numerous.

For instance, it's not hard to envision the 26-year-old Hayes providing more run production without the nagging injuries that hampered him the past two seasons. In 2022, he batted .244 with seven homers and 41 RBI in 136 games while dealing with a back issue.

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"There's tremendous upside there offensively and we know he's one of the premier defenders in the game," Shelton said of Hayes, who added 10-plus pounds of muscle during the offseason. "We've seen him go through stretches where he's a really good hitter and stretches where he's struggled. Some of that had to do with he's battled injuries, and that's very challenging for a young player. But there's definitely a ton of upside. There are so many good things that he does. We're really looking forward to his 2023 season."

Having Bednar, who missed nearly two months with a cranky back last year, available for a full season would also be a huge plus. The 28-year-old righthander said, "It was very frustrating to be on the shelf for that long." Nonetheless, the All-Star closer saved 19 games for Pittsburgh last season, and he's the heart and soul of a bullpen that will also include Colin Holderman, Wil Crowe, Duane Underwood Jr., Chase De Jong, and Garcia (who unfortunately was sidelined with arm tightness after a few Grapefruit League outings).

"It's really important to have a tight-knit group in the bullpen, and I think we have that this year," Bednar said. "There's that kind of brotherhood down there. We have each other's backs. With the arms we have down there this year it's going to be really fun to watch them get after it."

In addition, Suwinski smacked 19 homers as a rookie last season. Castro and Contreras are abundantly talented and have the potential to be breakout performers this year. So too does Endy Rodriguez, a 22-year-old catcher with a big bat and enough versatility to play elsewhere on the diamond. He was named the MVP of the High-A South Atlantic League last year and the MVP of the Low-A Florida State League in 2021.

As Pirates color analyst Bob Walk said during a spring training telecast: "That's a serious prospect when you've got someone who's done that. Going back-to-back like that in the minor leagues just doesn't happen very often."

And the list doesn't end there.

Other players who have a chance to play a role in Pittsburgh this year include infielders Ji Hwan Bae, Tucupita Marcano and perhaps Nick Gonzales, outfielders Travis Swaggerty and Cal Mitchell, and pitchers Johan Oviedo, Luis Ortiz, Mike Burrows and Quinn Priester. Marin called Burrows and Priester "two composed young dudes that we're very excited about."

As a member of a rival N.L. Central team last year, McCutchen noticed Pittsburgh's group of budding young players. That was part of the reason he sought an opportunity to return.

"I feel like this group of guys is special," he said. "The talent is there. It's just a matter of it clicking and a matter of believing. It's a matter of getting to where you don't just see spurts of it, you see the consistency of it."

"To be good we're going to need our young players to continue to develop and we want to make sure we continue to provide the runway for that," Cherington said. "But this was an offseason where we felt like it was time add some experience back in."

"I think everyone knows we've got a lot of talent in this clubhouse," Reynolds said. "We've got veteran guys now and we've got young guys who are talented. We have a veteran presence that we haven't necessarily had the past couple of years. So yeah, I think there's an optimism based off that."

> **"I FEEL LIKE THIS GROUP OF GUYS IS SPECIAL."**
>
> ANDREW McCUTCHEN

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PIRATES CHARITIES MIRACLE LEAGUE FANTASY CAMPS BRING JOY TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

For well over a decade, Pirates Charities, the philanthropic arm of the Pirates, has played a vital role in the construction of nine Miracle League fields — eight in the Pittsburgh region and one in Bradenton, Florida.

The first was the Miracle League of Southwestern PA, whose facility is located at Graham Park in Cranberry Township about 30 minutes north of Pittsburgh. The Pirates helped christen that complex in 2009 and have visited many times since — including July 30 of last year when they participated in a Miracle League fantasy camp for children and young adults with special needs.

Pirates chairman Bob Nutting, president Travis Williams, general manager Ben Cherington, manager Derek Shelton, bench coach Don Kelly, and a group of players that included David Bednar and Chase De Jong attended.

"Sometimes projects like this get a lot of attention at first, then something else replaces it, but we're blessed because the excitement is still there 14 seasons later," said Mike Sherry, president of the Miracle League of Southwestern PA. "Miracle League is still a top-of-mind program and a lot of that is because of Bob Nutting and the Pirates. It's cool to see that lineup, with players and coaches and ownership, come out and visit our field."

Last summer's event, hosted by Pirates Charities and sponsored by Baseball Fantasy Camp for Kids, included athletes from seven other Miracle Leagues — Upper St. Clair, Moon Township, Murrysville, Indiana and Altoona in Pennsylvania and Wheeling and Morgantown in West Virginia. Participants rotated through stations where Pirates players and coaches provided helpful tips on hitting, pitching, fielding and baserunning.

Holly Recker signed her son Luke up for the Miracle League of Southwestern PA's inaugural season in 2009. Luke, who has cerebral palsy, is a young adult now and still loves the program.

"We've been involved with the Miracle League since Luke was just a little, tiny kid," she said. "He's grown up here. We're here every Saturday in the summer and every Saturday in the fall.

"Miracle League changed Luke's world. It gave him the freedom to come to a place where everyone is the same. No one judges. We've made so many friends here."

Heartwarming stories like that are among the reasons the Miracle League program remains a point of emphasis in the Pirates' community relations efforts.

"Seeing it start from the small seed of this very field (Cranberry) and expand into the Pirates supporting nine total fields — the number of kids impacted, the number of parents impacted, the number of families impacted — has been remarkable," Nutting said. "There are so many places where we (as a society) get divided today, and too few places where people come together. One place where they do come together, frankly, is baseball. And one of those is the Miracle League program.

"These families go through a lot of challenges. It's nice for them to know there are a lot of people who care and are pulling with them."

The Miracle League players who take part in fantasy camps receive a commemorative medal, a Pirates jersey and cap, the opportunity to create their own baseball cards, lunch, and autographs from Pirates players, coaches, and mascots.

This year, Pirates Charities held a fantasy camp in Florida for the Miracle League of Manasota on February 22 — a few days before Grapefruit League play began. Bednar, JT Brubaker, Colin Holderman, Rich Hill and Quinn Priester were among the Pirates players who participated in the festivities that day.

"It's been a few years since we've been able to hold this event in Florida due to COVID restrictions and safety concerns," said executive director of Pirates Charities and community engagement Jacque Skowvron. "But this year we were thrilled to be able to provide this opportunity again for the Miracle League kids and their families."

"We're happy anytime we can get out to the Miracle League and see the smiles on everyone's faces," Shelton said. "It makes you realize how important this is to them. And anything you do that involves children, and children with special needs, keeps you grounded."

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PIRATES CHARITIES CONTINUES TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO YOUTH BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL ORGANIZATIONS THROUGH ITS FIELDS FOR KIDS PROGRAM

In 2009, Pirates Charities launched its Fields for Kids program, which provides matching grants to youth organizations to improve baseball and softball facilities and ensure that kids have a place to play the game they love, while creating bonds with their coaches and peers. Since its inception, the program has distributed 425 individual grants ranging from $1,000 to $25,000 throughout the Pittsburgh region. It has also issued 46 additional grants in the Pirates' spring training home of Bradenton, Florida.

In 2022, Pirates Charities welcomed the support of longtime corporate partner Highmark to Fields for Kids, expanding the overall impact the program can have on the community.

Funds received through the program can be used to upgrade essential field components such as sod, infield playing surfaces, fencing, dugouts, and irrigation systems. Organizations can also utilize grants to make upgrades to their overall facility — including lights, bleachers, scoreboards and concession stands. Additionally, groups can apply for support for equipment and uniform needs, two other areas of cost that often create hurdles for families and leagues.

"The Fields for Kids program is one of the most impactful Pirates Charities initiatives in terms of the sheer number of children that it positively impacts throughout the Pittsburgh region and in the Bradenton area," said Bob Nutting, chairman of the Pirates and Pirates Charities. "Tens of thousands of youth baseball and softball players each season now have improved facilities to play the game we all love, and an opportunity to share in priceless memories with their teammates, friends and family."

The Fields for Kids program, presented by Highmark, is now accepting applications. Interested youth organizations located in select counties in Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia are encouraged to visit pirates.com/fieldsforkids to learn more about the program and complete a grant application.

"Highmark is proud to team up with the Pirates to make youth baseball and softball programs more accessible for kids across the greater Pittsburgh region," said Kenya Boswell, senior vice president of community affairs for Highmark Health. "These programs are an important part of the fabric of the communities that we proudly serve, promoting physical activity, teamwork, and neighborhood pride. By removing some of the financial barriers to playing, more kids can take the field while developing social and life skills that help them be at their best."

There have been numerous heartwarming stories associated with the popular Fields for Kids program during its 15 years of existence. One of them unfolded back in summer of 2021 when a Pirates Charities contingent led by Nutting was on hand for the dedication of a new equipment storage unit at Legion Keener Park in Latrobe.

A fire that involved suspected arson had destroyed the existing storage unit and the baseball equipment inside it that was used by the Latrobe Little League organization. Support from the community and a generous donation from Pirates Charities through the Fields for Kids program enabled a new storage unit to be built and the equipment to be replaced so the games could go on. The costs of new benches and bases and upgrades to the infield surface and pitching mound were also covered.

"This is about so much more than the shed or the new equipment that we helped fund," Nutting said on that memorable afternoon. "It's really a celebration of baseball — a celebration of these kids, the coaches who support them throughout the season, and this community that came together. That really is what Pirates Charities is about. Helping to support baseball, these kids, and this community."

"It burned down and Channel 11 (WPXI-TV) came out and did a little story, and the next day was when Pirates Charities got ahold of me and said that they wanted to help us out," Latrobe Little League president John Russo said the day the new storage facility was unveiled. "I can't even thank these people enough. I tear up when I start talking about it. It's overwhelming."

Here in 2023, Pirates Charities and Highmark will come together once again to help ensure that inspiring stories like that are even more plentiful.

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COMMUNITY

PIRATES CHARITIES, AHN EXPAND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AVAILABLE TO LOCAL SCHOOLS VIA CHILL MOBILE VEHICLE

Officials from Pirates Charities and Allegheny Health Network (AHN) were all smiles at Chartiers Valley High School on October 26, 2022, when they unveiled a mobilized version of AHN's Chill Project. The two groups purchased and customized an RV, known as Chill Mobile, that now travels to school districts throughout western Pennsylvania to greatly expand the reach of the program.

Offered through AHN's Psychiatry & Behavioral Health Institute, and led by a team of behavioral health specialists, the Chill Project uses mindfulness-based exercises to equip students, teachers and parents with an evidence-based, standardized approach to identifying, discussing and managing stress, anxiety and other mental health concerns.

"School has always been a source of stress — whether you are taking classes, teaching or parenting a student — and negative reactions to stress create a significant barrier to learning and growth," said Dr. Will Davies, founder and director of the Chill Project. "Our program has proven to be an extremely effective means of improving the health and well-being of participants, and we are super excited about the opportunity to further expand access to these services through this new mobile capability."

Chill Mobile offers students in grades K-12 a calming space where they can learn coping skills and participate in practical and interactive experiences with the goals of improving individual mental health, extending the conversation into the larger community, and reducing the stigma surrounding mental health treatment.

Among the features of the Chill Mobile vehicle are Pirates-themed programming including a virtual PNC Park experience, messages from Pirates players, Pirates-themed giveaways and more. Additional supporters include the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County, PNC, and the Palumbo Charitable Trust.

"There are schools in underrepresented areas that just don't have either the space or the resources to be able to launch the brick and mortar-based Chill Project," Pirates president Travis Williams said. "So we started talking about that and saying, 'Why can't we bring it to them on wheels?' We talked about not only what's going on with mental health — trying to reduce the stigma and trying to bring resources to kids — but how unique this program is, being able to put it on wheels and bring it to those schools that didn't have access.

"For the Pirates and Pirates Charities, it wasn't just about funding the project, it was about being part of it and helping to develop it."

One of the pillars of the program is sharing with students the message that, "It's okay not to be okay." During his remarks at the unveiling, Dr. Davies gave a tip of the cap to several Chill Project clinicians who were in attendance. Their efforts range from helping kids with bumps in the road all the way to saving lives.

"We're really trying to bring awareness to school communities that it's okay to have conversations about how we're doing emotionally just as it's okay to have conversations about how we're doing physically," he said.

"The Chill Project clinicians are on the front lines. They're the real heroes in all of this," Williams added. "They're dealing with issues, getting kids to engage, and saving lives — and they're doing it every day. They're doing it in crisis situations, and they're also helping kids learn coping techniques and how to relieve stress."

AHN offers Chill Project programming in about 30 Pittsburgh-area schools, where specially designed "Chill Rooms" have been created. According to Davies, schools participating in the program have experienced benefits that include reduced numbers of behavioral health incidents for students — such as chronic absence, disruptive behavior, dropping out of school, and feelings of hopelessness — plus enhanced professional quality of life for educators and administrators, and increased well-being for parents and caregivers.

"The need for community-based mental health services has never been more pressing, and we are extremely grateful to Pirates Charities and our other partners for their investment in and commitment to this unique endeavor," said Allie Quick, chief philanthropy officer at AHN. "The AHN Chill Project has already made a tremendous difference in the lives of many, and our new mobile program will increase those numbers exponentially."

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VETERAN PRESENCE

A CLOSER LOOK AT EXPERIENCED PIRATES NEWCOMERS HILL, HEDGES, SANTANA AND CHOI

by Jim Lachimia

HURLER HILL STILL GOING STRONG AT AGE 43

The 2023 season is Rich Hill's 19th year in the major leagues and the Pirates are the 12th team the 43-year-old left-handed pitcher has played for since it all began back in 2005.

But they say time flies when you're having fun. So, does it seem like that many years and that many teams?

"It goes by pretty quick, so no, it doesn't seem like it's been that kind of accumulation of years," Hill said after a workout at Pirate City in Bradenton, FL, in late February. "At some point I'll sit down and go over it year by year, think about what's happened over the course of the past couple decades, and rethink the times that I've had with teammates. It's a lot of years and there are a lot of guys that I've played with.

"When you say 19 years, it certainly doesn't feel like it's been that long. But it's lots of memories and lots of experiences. Ups and downs, failures and successes all come along with playing for a long time. Good challenges, good learning paths. Understanding leadership roles and understanding how to do your job. Being able to understand what you do best. Controlling what you can control.

"There are a lot of cliché statements that come along with a long career, but they're all very true."

When sure-fire Hall of Famer Albert Pujols (born January 16, 1980) retired at the end of last season, Hill (born March 11, 1980) became the oldest active player in the major leagues. The second oldest is now San Diego Padres designated hitter Nelson Cruz (born July 1, 1980) and the next oldest pitcher is Adam Wainwright of the St. Louis Cardinals (born August 30, 1981).

Interestingly, Hill — who signed with Pittsburgh as a free agent last December — is a few years older than Pirates pitching coach Oscar Marin (who turned 40 last December).

"I knew that was going to come up," Marin said with a laugh. "But it makes me feel young, so it's good."

Hill was selected by the Chicago Cubs in the fourth round of the 2002 MLB draft after three seasons at the University of Michigan. The Boston native made his big-league debut for the Cubs during the 2005 campaign and entered 2023 at 82-59 lifetime (.582 winning percentage) with a 3.85 ERA in 350 games (221 starts), 1,294 strikeouts in 1,259 innings, and a .228 opponents batting average. All very respectable numbers.

"He's the real deal," Marin said. "He's a great competitor, and he's going to be a great influence on our guys. When he speaks, guys listen."

Over the years, Hill has become known for the quality and effectiveness of his curveball. But truth be told, he doesn't have just one curveball because he throws the pitch at a variety of speeds and from a variety of arm angles.

"There are different shapes to the breaking ball. That's really the easiest way to break it down," said Hill, who is 6'5" tall and remains in excellent physical condition. "It's trying to change the shape of the breaking ball, change the angle of the breaking ball. Trying to make it be as creative as possible.

"I've always had an ability to spin a breaking ball, throw a curveball. That was something I was fortunate to have when I was younger. I just continued to work on it throughout my career, and I'm always trying to perfect it, even today. It's always a work in progress."

In 2023, Hill is expected to be a key member of a Pirates starting rotation that will also include fellow newcomer Vince Velasquez as well as Mitch Keller, JT Brubaker and Roansy Contreras (20 years younger than Hill at 23) — with Johan Oviedo, Luis Ortiz and perhaps Mike Burrows and Quinn Priester not far behind.

What advice does Hill have for the rest of the group?

"As a starting pitcher, you have to understand what you do best, what's working best for you that day," he said. "And not to abandon your best pitch, even if it might not be there for you right away that day. Stay with it in an outing. You'll find the feel for it. You'll find the ability to throw it for strikes. Ultimately, it will wind up coming back in that outing.

"There are a whole bunch of things that guys learn whether it's their first major-league spring training or their 19th major-league spring training. You're constantly working on your craft and trying to get better. It's a never-ending process."

HEDGES BECOMES THE DEAN OF THE CATCHING CORPS

Pirates catchers who have earned Rawlings Gold Glove Awards over the years include Tony Peña (three — 1983-1985), Mike LaValliere (1987) and Jacob Stallings (2021). And it's not far-fetched to suggest that Pittsburgh's new backstop — Austin Hedges — could pick up the honor this year. He's that good defensively. Plus, Yadier Molina of the Cardinals — who won nine Gold Gloves — retired following the 2022 season.

The 30-year-old Hedges signed with the Pirates as a free agent shortly before Christmas. Since the beginning of the 2015 season, he's had 75 defensive runs saved, the most among major-league catchers (according to the Fielding Bible). In 2022, Hedges started 97 games for American League Central champion Cleveland and caught 839.2 innings, committing only five errors and one passed ball.

What's more, Guardians pitchers compiled a 3.37 ERA when he was behind the plate. That group included former Cy Young Award winner Shane Bieber, 15-game winner Cal Quantrill, and Emmanuel Clase, the A.L. leader in saves last year with 42.

Hedges — a Southern California native who played travel ball as a kid with Matt Chapman, Joe Musgrove, Michael Lorenzen, Bryce Harper and a couple other current big leaguers — is definitely a defense-first catcher. He entered 2023 with a .189 batting average in eight seasons in the majors (605 games). However, Hedges had 18 home runs and 55 RBI (both career-highs) for San Diego in 2017 and has reached double digits in homers four times.

"There's no hiding that we really appreciate the defense. Austin's been elite at that part of the game," Pirates general manager Ben Cherington said. "But we think he can produce more offense too. He has some raw power. Our hitting (coaches) group may have some things that can help. It's a new environment, new people, and a fresh start. We're hopeful he can be a professional at-bat in the lineup."

Hedges, who said he's always taken pride in being a leader, becomes the dean of the Pirates' catching group. Tyler Heineman and Jason Delay started 50 and 49 games respectively behind the plate for Pittsburgh last season, and figure to provide support for Hedges.

Kevin Plawecki, another catcher with major-league experience, was also in camp as a non-roster player this spring. In addition, two of Pittsburgh's top three prospects (according to MLB Pipeline) — Endy Rodriguez at No. 2 and Henry Davis at No. 3 — are catchers.

But as Pirates manager Derek Shelton said, "You can never have too much catching depth. Catching is gold in the industry."

Hedges' mother, Pam, grew up just south of Pittsburgh in Upper St. Clair, and he and his family used to visit relatives in the area each summer. Those trips included attending games at PNC Park where he enjoyed the exploits of Jason Bay, Francisco Liriano, Russell Martin and others.

> **YOU CAN NEVER HAVE TOO MUCH CATCHING DEPTH. CATCHING IS GOLD IN THE INDUSTRY.**
>
> DEREK SHELTON

Now PNC Park is where Hedges will go to work on a regular basis in an effort to help the Pirates' pitching staff become the best that it can be. And he believes he will be up to the task.

"What Cleveland did last year with a young staff and getting into the playoffs, I see no reason why Pittsburgh can't be that club this year," Hedges said. "I know the arm talent is there. Now, with some game-calling philosophy and trusting one another and disregarding the hitter a little bit, I think it will help guys get to the next level."

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SANTANA AND CHOI PROVIDE POWERFUL BATS

Carlos Santana and Ji Man Choi were both acquired by the Pirates last November for the same reasons — to provide productive power bats and perform regularly at the first base and designated hitter spots. Santana, 37, was signed as free agent and Choi, 31, came over from the Tampa Bay Rays in exchange for minor-league pitcher Jack Hartman.

Santana was an American League All-Star with the Cleveland Indians in 2019 when he hit .281 with 34 home runs and 93 RBI in 158 games. He also earned a Silver Slugger Award that season. The switch-hitter from the Dominican Republic entered 2023 with nearly 1,800 games on his major-league resume and 278 lifetime home runs. He's collected at least 20 home runs in a season seven times (and 19 three other times), and at least 30 doubles and 85 RBI five times.

The left-handed-hitting Choi is a native of South Korea who came to the United States after signing with the Seattle Mariners organization as an 18-year-old in 2009. After gaining major-league experience with the Los Angeles Angels, New York Yankees and Milwaukee Brewers, his best season came with Tampa Bay in 2019 when he batted .261 with 20 doubles, 19 home runs and 63 RBI in 127 games.

"We have confidence in both of those guys," Cherington said. "They've both been very capable to above-average defenders at first base. I certainly see them playing a lot and in our lineup a lot, and we'll leave it up to Shelty on a day-to-day basis who's at first and who's DHing — and who else potentially fits into that. There's two spots in the lineup there, and we think both of them lengthen our position-player group out and give us a chance to put together tougher at bats as we go through the lineup."

Santana and Choi also bring something else to the table. Considerable playoff experience. Santana has made five trips to the postseason and participated in a total of eight series — including the 2016 World Series with Cleveland. Meanwhile, Choi also has eight postseason series under his belt — all with Tampa Bay over the past four years — including the 2020 World Series.

Hill (10 series — including two World Series) and Hedges (three series including a pair with Cleveland last year) also bring playoff experience to the table.

"I have a lot of years of experience, and I'm looking forward to bringing that experience here," Santana said at his introductory press conference in November. "These young guys here, there's a lot of talent. There's a lot of potential. I've been in this situation before. I've been in a clubhouse with a lot of young talent. I can bring my experience and be here for them. I've heard nothing but really good things about this group."

"I'm aware the Pirates are young right now, but when I first got to the Rays, it was kind of a similar situation," Choi said on the same topic, through interpreter Daniel Park. "There were a lot of young guys. But I learned how to approach them through the veterans who were there at that time. I try to bring everyone together and create a good synergy for the team, and that's what I'll do here."

Acquiring Choi on November 10 was Cherington's first major move of the offseason, and at the time he said:

"We think he fits well for us. Left-handed hitter with a history of on-base skills, good defender, good reputation as a teammate. We felt good about this as a first move and we'll continue to look at ways to add to the offense. First base was a spot where we saw a lot of different guys last year, and we need to get more offensive production out of that."

A few weeks later, Cherington discussed the signing of Santana by saying:

"He's been a consistent performer for a long time. He hits from both sides of the plate. He's continued to walk a lot, not strike out (a lot), hit the ball hard. He remains a strong defensive player. So, as we look to both lengthen out our lineup, add some good quality at bats and on-base ability and continue to strengthen the first base-DH spot, he was a player we had targeted at the outset of the offseason."

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RETURN ENGAGEMENT

FORMER N.L. MVP ANDREW McCUTCHEN IS BACK IN BLACK AND GOLD

by Jim Lachimia

Andrew McCutchen was a bright-eyed 18-year-old when the Pirates made him their first-round draft pick in 2005 out of Fort Meade (FL) High School.

The multi-talented outfielder was 22 when he made his major-league debut against the New York Mets at PNC Park on June 4, 2009. That afternoon, he led off, collected two hits and an RBI, and scored three times in an 11-6 Pittsburgh triumph.

McCutchen was 25 and blossoming into one of the game's best players when the Pirates announced in March of 2012 that he had signed a six-year contract extension. He justified the ballclub's commitment to him by hitting .327 and topping the National League with 194 hits that season.

In 2013, "Cutch" was voted the league's MVP after leading Pittsburgh to 94 regular-season victories and the first of three straight appearances in postseason play. The Pirates knocked off the Cincinnati Reds in a thrilling N.L. Wild Card Game that year before dropping a tight battle to the St. Louis Cardinals in the N.L. Division Series.

HEN
2

In nine seasons in a Pittsburgh uniform (2009-2017), McCutchen was a five-time All-Star who batted .291 with 203 home runs and 725 RBI in 1,346 games.

He's already the most talented, successful, and popular Pirate of the PNC Park era.

And now, at age 36, McCutchen is back.

After five years away, and time spent with four other ballclubs — including the Milwaukee Brewers last season — No. 22 re-signed with Pittsburgh in a move that came together quickly and quietly in mid-January.

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette first broke the story that McCutchen, who still makes his offseason home in the Pittsburgh area, was interested in a reunion. He texted Pirates Chairman Bob Nutting and stated his desire to return. Nutting shared the development with General Manager Ben Cherington, who worked out a deal with McCutchen and his agent Steve Hammond.

The Pirates officially announced that McCutchen was back on January 20.

That afternoon, McCutchen walked into the press conference room at PNC Park accompanied by his wife Maria and the couple's three young children — daughter Ave Maria and sons Steel and Armani. The family was greeted by applause from a strong media contingent and a large gathering of friends and members of the Pirates' front office.

As he entered the room, McCutchen flashed his familiar smile and said, "What's going on? There's a whole crew of people in here. My goodness."

As part of his opening remarks, Cherington said: "I have the great honor today to welcome Andrew McCutchen back to the Pirates. Andrew, thank you for the faith you're showing in us to come back here and be part of what we're building. We really can't wait to see you in black and gold."

Cherington kept his remarks brief because he was eager to turn the microphone over to the man of the hour.

At that moment, McCutchen was elated, emotional, and concerned that he wouldn't be able to adequately express how he felt. But he did fine.

"It's amazing to be here. To have this opportunity to be able to come back, it doesn't always happen," he said. "You don't always get that chance. I was just hoping that I would get that chance again because this place is a part of me.

"One of the coolest things is I get to show my kids that this is part of who I was and it's part of who I am. They'll get to see that, and they'll get to really feel it. It won't just be a story that I tell them one day. They'll actually get to be part of it.

> **"I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO BEING IN FRONT OF THESE FANS HERE IN PITTSBURGH AGAIN."**
>
> ANDREW McCUTCHEN

"I'm thankful for Bob and Ben and (Pirates President) Travis (Williams) and everyone who has given me a chance to come back. To be able to come back and help in any way that I can, I'm looking forward to it.

"I'm looking forward to being in front of these fans here in Pittsburgh again. But I'm not here on a farewell tour. I'm here to play and I'm here to help this ballclub win. First and foremost, that's what I want people to know."

McCutchen played center field throughout his previous stint with Pittsburgh, and it's interesting to note that the team's current star outfielder — Bryan Reynolds — was the key part of the return when "Cutch" was traded to the San Francisco Giants early in 2018. Both players have started in center field in the Major League Baseball All-Star Game — McCutchen in 2014 and 2015 and Reynolds in 2021.

As a senior at Fort Meade High School, McCutchen batted a whopping .709 with 16 home runs and 42 RBI. No wonder Baseball America rated him the top player eligible for the draft in the state of Florida in 2005.

That draft was top-heavy with hitters as Justin Upton, Alex Gordon, Ryan Zimmerman, Ryan Braun and Troy Tulowitzki — all of whom went on to become stars in the majors — were among the first 10 players selected. Meanwhile, the Pirates were delighted to land McCutchen with the 11th pick.

"Going through high school I never failed," McCutchen said. "I hit .700 as a senior. That's unheard of. When I got drafted, I didn't know what failure was. I didn't understand the word.

"So that was the mentality I had when I played (early in his minor-league career). 'I'm going to go out there and hit .700 again. Yeah, I'm playing more games now, but I can still hit .700.' Then when I was hitting .300-something I thought that was bad. That was how my young mind looked at it. I didn't realize I still had a lot to learn about the game."

However, in only his second season as a professional, McCutchen was named Pirates Minor League Player of the Year after batting .294 with 17 homers, 74 RBI and 23 stolen bases in 134 games with Hickory (Low-A) and Altoona (AA). He was promoted to Altoona in August, skipping the High-A level.

Though it would be a few more years before he reached the majors, McCutchen was on a path toward stardom, and everybody knew it.

McCutchen has great respect for Pirates history and isn't entirely comfortable when folks mention him in same breath as the greatest players in the history of the franchise. But plenty of people rightfully put him in that category.

Willie Stargell was the MVP of the league, the NLCS and the World Series at age 39 in 1979. Roberto Clemente was 37 when he led the Pirates to a World Championship in 1971, and 38 when he collected his 3,000th career hit the following season.

"To see what those guys accomplished in their careers and how long they did it is something that you don't take lightly," McCutchen said. "Guys like Willie Stargell and Roberto Clemente didn't just do well in the early stages of their careers. They did better as their careers went on."

Shifting back to the January 20 press conference, McCutchen was asked what he seeks to accomplish in his return to the Pirates, what chapter he would like to add — since he's already enjoyed great success and become a fan favorite in Pittsburgh.

"It's still plain and simple. I want to win, but specifically I want to win here," he said. "I know what it feels like to win here, and I know what it feels like to lose here too. I think I'll be able to be that voice in the clubhouse to those guys, to my teammates. I want to instill in them what a place it is here already, and what a place it is when you win here too."

Not surprisingly, McCutchen's favorite moment as a Pirate was the 2013 Wild Card Game, which he has referred to as "an all-around great game to remember" and "the loudest crowd I've ever been a part of." And last December, he told Baseball Digest, "I honestly felt with the team that we had in 2013, if we could beat the Cardinals in the NLDS we'd win the World Series. We were ready and excited, and so was the fan base, just as much as we were."

Welcome back, Cutch. And here's to many more great moments with the Pirates.

BEDNAR HAS BECOME A STANDOUT PERFORMER FOR HIS HOMETOWN TEAM

by Jim Lachimia

If you see David Bednar out and about in Pittsburgh, don't be surprised if the area native is smiling from ear to ear. He's an upbeat and positive guy. Plus, a lot of great things have happened in his life and career over the past year or so.

In 2022, Bednar emerged as Pittsburgh's closer. Despite a back issue that sidelined him in August and most of September, the 28-year-old righthander registered 19 saves and compiled a 2.61 ERA in 45 appearances. He was named the National League's Reliever of the Month for May (when he posted seven saves and a pair of victories) and he represented the Pirates at the Major League Baseball All-Star Game at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles in July.

Then in September, the Pirates announced that Bednar was their nominee for MLB's Roberto Clemente Award, an annual recognition of the player who best represents the game through outstanding character and extraordinary contributions on and off the field.

In January of this year, Bednar married Casey Merritt, who like him is a graduate of Mars (PA) High School, located about 30 minutes north of Pittsburgh. Then in early February, the school retired Bednar's uniform No. 24, which he wore when he starred for the Planets. And finally, in March he had the honor of pitching for Team USA during the World Baseball Classic.

"It's been an absolute whirlwind for sure, but it's all cool stuff," Bednar said. "Sometimes I still pinch myself because some of the things that have happened have been pretty unbelievable. I just tried to soak it all up, make the most of every opportunity, and enjoy every moment."

On becoming the first Mars High School alumnus to have his or her number retired, Bednar said:

"I've seen some of the athletes who have been through here, and they're incredibly talented and doing big things. So, to be the first one, it's really an honor. I'm so proud of this high school, so proud to be from Pittsburgh, and I try to do my best to represent the area as well as I can."

And on being nominated for the prestigious Clemente Award, which wound up going to third baseman Justin Turner of the Dodgers, Bednar shared:

"It's incredibly humbling to be nominated for the award. Growing up in Pittsburgh, I was fortunate to have a great understanding of who Roberto was as a player, and more importantly, as a human being. I hope to continue to honor the Clemente name by helping others in need and by spreading the love of the game throughout the community."

Bednar, who was acquired from the San Diego Padres in January of 2021, is indeed a solid citizen and a heck of a pitcher.

"What David has done shows that we did a good job identifying the right person in that trade," Pirates manager Derek Shelton said. "Then on top of that when you're able to bring a kid home to the team that he grew up cheering for, and his family is still here, it's a really cool story."

"David's performance on the field speaks for itself," Pirates general manager Ben Cherington added. "He's developed into one of the better relievers in baseball and he's so important to us. He can talk baseball as well as he can pitch it, and that makes him fun to be around. But first and foremost, he's a critical part of our bullpen and he's going to help us win a lot of games."

Bednar had only 17 games of big-league experience when he joined the Pirates, but quickly found success with Pittsburgh. In his first two seasons in black and gold, he went 6-5 with 22 saves and a 2.40 ERA in 106 games and struck out 146 batters in 112.1 innings.

> **"David's performance on the field speaks for itself."** BEN CHERINGTON

And on the rare occasions when things don't go well for him, it's certainly not because he's tentative or nervous.

"One of the things that's been instilled in me since I was a little kid is, 'Leave it all out on the mound,'" Bednar said. "It's just me versus the hitter out there, and I'm trying to beat that guy, whatever it takes. I'm just going to go right after him."

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SHOCK & AWE

by Jim Lachimia

CRUZ PUT HIS DAZZLING TOOLS ON DISPLAY DURING IMPRESSIVE ROOKIE SEASON

Oneil Cruz is an imposing figure at 6'7" and 220 pounds, but his skills are even more impressive. Using adjectives like incredible, spectacular, eye-popping and mind-blowing sound over the top. However, in his case, they're accurate descriptions of things he can do on the field.

The baseball world couldn't help but notice that in 2022.

The 24-year-old shortstop was promoted from Indianapolis (AAA) to Pittsburgh on June 20, and from that point through the end of the season, he ranked first among National League rookies in home runs (17) and RBI (54) and second in slugging percentage (.450), OPS (.744), extra-base hits (34) and total bases (149).

Those are good numbers, but what was amazing was how hard Cruz hit the ball on a regular basis. His exit velocities drew attention far and wide.

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"THAT'S SOMETHING THAT YOU JUST DON'T SEE

Here are a few examples:

On August 4 vs. the Milwaukee Brewers, he hit a 118.4-mph single that, at the time, was the hardest hit ball by a Pirate since the advent of the Statcast era in 2015.

On August 24 vs. the Atlanta Braves, Cruz hit a 122.4-mph single that became the hardest hit ball by an MLB player in the Statcast era.

On August 29 against the Brewers in Milwaukee, he blasted a 437-foot home run at 118 mph. It was the hardest hit home run by a Pirate in the Statcast era.

But wait, there's more.

Last season, Cruz was also clocked throwing the ball across the diamond (93.9 mph average velocity), running from home plate to first base, and motoring around the basepaths (nearly 30 feet per second) as fast as anyone in the game.

"When you see Oneil in person for the first time it's hard to wrap your head around somebody that size moving that quickly and moving that fluidly," said Pirates director of coaching and player development John Baker. "That would be the first part that stood out when I first saw him. Then it was like, 'Wow, this is a guy that potentially has the best arm, the best speed and the most power on every baseball field that he's on. That's something that you just don't see."

Baker, who is in his third season in the organization, was skeptical when he was first told that the Pirates had a 6'7" shortstop who seemed destined for the majors.

"I remember saying, 'That's never happened in the history of baseball, as far as somebody doing it at the major-league level at 6-7,'" Baker said. "Then I saw him in person, and I said, 'Well, I guess this is the one case. This is the definition of unique.' I think I would describe watching Oneil play as shock and awe.

"I was in the Marlins organization (as a player) when Giancarlo — then Mike — Stanton was 19 years old, and he came to major-league spring training. That's the only similar experience I had in baseball where I looked at somebody and said, 'Wow, I've just never seen anybody hit the ball that hard.' It wasn't until I saw Oneil play that I saw another player with a comparable skill as far as how hard he hits the ball."

Last season, Cruz smacked six home runs in 50 at bats against Milwaukee. Andrew McCutchen, who was then a Brewer but has returned to the Pirates, took notice.

"When you're a professional baseball player who sees baseball all the time and all types of players, and then you see someone like Cruz hit a ball 120 miles an hour you're like, 'Oh my goodness,'" McCutchen said. "When we react that way, it shows you what his talent is. It speaks to what he can be. It's tremendous watching what he does. You're at the edge of your seat to see what he's going to do. Whether it's hitting the ball, running down the line, or throwing the ball across the infield, he does it all so well and so effortlessly."

And now McCutchen and Cruz are both Pirates.

"Yeah, he can hit as many homers as he wants now," McCutchen said with a laugh.

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SLICK-FIELDING HAYES IS AMONG BASEBALL'S BEST AT THIRD BASE

by Jim Lachimia

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When someone finally wrestles the Rawlings Gold Glove Award for National League third basemen away from Nolan Arenado, there's an excellent chance it will be Ke'Bryan Hayes.

Remarkably, Arenado has picked up the honor in each of his 10 seasons in the majors — eight with the Colorado Rockies (2013-2020) and two as a St. Louis Cardinal (2021-2022). By comparison, Scott Rolen — who will be inducted into the Hall of Fame this summer — earned eight Gold Gloves at the hot corner.

The last N.L. third baseman other than Arenado to win a Gold Glove was Chase Headley of the San Diego Padres back in 2012. However, Hayes — who has been Pittsburgh's third baseman since September of 2020 — has entered the conversation regarding where that honor will go in the future.

Last season, the son of former major-league third baseman Charlie Hayes led all major leaguers with 24 defensive runs saved, according to the Fielding Bible. In addition, he led N.L. third basemen with a .972 fielding percentage (Arenado was at .968). Hayes also posted the highest single-season fielding percentage ever by a Pirates third baseman (minimum 100 games).

Hayes, Arenado and Colorado's Ryan McMahon were the finalists for the N.L. Gold Glove at third. And for those into analytics, it should be noted that Hayes led MLB third basemen in outs above average with 18 (Arenado was second with 15).

"I don't get too caught up in the analytic stuff," Hayes once said. "There's enough to think about in the game day today without that. I just try to work on my defense as hard as I do my offense, because you're not going to be able to go get two or three hits every day. You have to be able to impact the game defensively too. You can make a great play or turn a double play that wins a ballgame. So I just try to make every play that I can for my team."

Talk of Hayes' defensive skills was common even before he arrived in Pittsburgh. That was because he won three Gold Gloves in the minor leagues with Bradenton (High-A) in 2017, Altoona (AA) in 2018 and Indianapolis (AAA) in 2019. What makes that particularly impressive is Rawlings selects only one player at each position throughout the entire minor leagues, not a player at every position in each league.

Hayes grades out well in terms of defensive analytics, and he also passes the eye test with flying colors. His skills, range, grace, body control and ease of action make him a joy to watch.

"These days we're a lot more clear on just how good someone's defense is because of metrics, and of course, the eyes don't lie either when you watch Ke'Bryan," Pirates general manager Ben Cherington said. "Even if you only watch him for a game or two, you can see it. But defense is something you appreciate more over time when you get to see him every day, and we do. He does things that don't even show up in the metrics. He has an innate feel for what's happening out on the field. He can slow the game down like nobody else I've ever seen defensively."

> **HE DOES THINGS THAT DON'T EVEN SHOW UP IN THE METRICS.**
>
> BEN CHERINGTON

"Ke'Bryan stands out because of the way he anticipates, the way his feet move, and the angles he's able to throw from," Pirates manager Derek Shelton added. "So yeah, we can measure it, but I don't even know if the measurements do him justice out there as a defender. He's so good and he does so many things that go unnoticed. He's just a lot of fun to watch."

Hayes batted .376 in 24 games when he made his debut with the Pirates in September of 2020. Although his offensive numbers haven't been as eye-popping the past two seasons, injuries have been a factor and the thinking inside the organization is his best days swinging the bat are still ahead of him.

"Obviously, Key's defense is elite, and we believe the offense will continue to come in time," Cherington said. "But he's already a really good major-league player."

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MLB RULES CHANGES AND A MORE BALANCED SCHEDULE ARE DESIGNED TO CREATE ADDITIONAL EXCITEMENT

During the 2023 season, you will get to enjoy a new brand of baseball that features more style, flair and excitement.

That's because Major League Baseball made rules changes that were designed to address what fans said they wanted — a better pace of play, more balls in play, and more action on the bases. In other words, less waiting and more activity.

Here's what's new this year:

PITCH TIMER

- The pitcher will have 15 seconds to deliver the ball with the bases empty, and 20 seconds with a runner (or runners) on base. The hitter must be in batter's box and alert to the pitcher with eight seconds remaining on the clock. Violations will result in an automatic ball for pitchers or an automatic strike for hitters. The pitch timer helped reduced the length of games by 25 minutes in the minor leagues in 2022.
- Hitters are permitted to call one timeout per plate appearance. Pitchers are allowed two disengagements — pickoff attempts or step-offs — per batter. Violations (by pitchers) will result in a balk. Limits on pickoff attempts led to a 26 percent increase in stolen base attempts in the minor leagues.

SHIFT RESTRICTIONS

- All four infielders are required to have both feet on infield dirt when the pitcher is on the rubber. Two infielders must be positioned on each side of second base when the pitch is delivered. Shift restrictions in the minors increased batting averages and decreased strikeouts, giving players more opportunities to display their athleticism.

LARGER BASES

- The size of first, second and third base has increased from 15″ to 18″ in width.
  Even though that's only a 3″ difference in the distance between home plate and first and third and home, and 4.5″ from first to second and second to third, the increase reduced injuries near the bases in the minor leagues by more than 13 percent in 2022. It also helped lead to more aggressive baserunning.
- More than 8,000 games of testing in the minor leagues that features these changes resulted in quicker games, fewer strikeouts, and more stolen bases.

  "The league is trying to build a game that's as exciting as possible with as much of the things that we love and as little of the things that maybe aren't as good," Pirates general manager Ben Cherington said. "Basically, that means more action and less dead time. And if you watched the game in the minor leagues last year, it's more baseball packed into a shorter amount of time. I think that's exactly what the league hopes for. If that's the outcome, it will be great."
- Another exciting element of 2023 is the more balanced schedule that MLB introduced. Each team's slate will no longer be heavily skewed toward division opponents. Schedules will feature more variety. In fact, every team will play every other team.

Here are more details:

- Each team will play 52 games (26 home and 26 away) against division opponents, decreased from 76 under the previous schedule structure. This will include 13 games against each division opponent, decreased from 19.
- Each team will play 64 non-division intraleague games (32 at home and 32 on the road), decreased from 66.
- Each team will play 46 interleague games (A.L. vs. N.L.), an increase from just 20 games. Teams will play a home-and-home series (four games total) against their natural interleague rivals and another 42 games against other interleague opponents (21 home and 21 away).

"I think the more balanced schedule is great for the game," Cherington said. "It makes a lot of sense that teams get to see every other team each year. If you're in Pittsburgh, or you're in any market, you know you're going to see every team at least every other year. As a fan of the game, I think that's a good thing."

"There's an opportunity for fans to see teams they don't normally see, which is great," Pirates manager Derek Shelton added. "On the competitive side, it's going to be very interesting to see how it plays out because your division games are going to become way more important — because there's a lot less of them now."

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40-MAN ROSTER AS OF 3/23/23

MANAGER, COACHES & STAFF

17	DEREK SHELTON	Manager
12	DON KELLY	Bench Coach
49	ANDY HAINES	Hitting Coach
96	MENDY LOPEZ	Infield Coach
88	CHRISTIAN MARRERO	Assistant Hitting Coach
47	OSCAR MARIN	Pitching Coach
16	TARRIK BROCK	First Base Coach
58	MIKE RABELO	Third Base Coach
87	JUSTIN MECCAGE	Bullpen Coach
90	RAUL HERNANDEZ	Bullpen Catcher
86	RADLEY HADDAD	Game Planning/Strategy Coach
82	JORDAN COMADENA	Bullpen Catcher/Catching Assistant
95	STEPHEN MORALES	Coach/Interpreter
97	TIM McKEITHAN	Coach
	JEREMY BLEICH	Major League Assistant

60-DAY IL (1)

#	NAME	B	T	HT	WT	DOB
45	MAX KRANICK	R	R	6′ 3″	220	07/21/1997

PITCHERS (20)

#	NAME	B	T	HT	WT	DOB
51	BEDNAR, DAVID	R	R	6′1″	250	10/10/1994
34	BRUBAKER, JT	R	R	6′3″	185	11/17/1993
53	BURROWS, MIKE	R	R	6′2″	195	11/03/1999
59	CONTRERAS, ROANSY	R	R	6′1″	205	11/07/1999
29	CROWE, WIL	R	R	6′2″	245	09/09/1994
37	DE JONG, CHASE	L	R	6′ 4″	230	12/29/1993
57	DE LOS SANTOS, YERRY	R	R	6′ 2″	215	12/12/1997
66	GARCÍA, JARLÍN	L	L	6′ 3″	215	01/18/1993
61	HERNANDEZ, JOSE	L	L	6′ 3″	205	12/31/1997
44	HILL, RICH	L	L	6′ 5″	221	03/11/1980
35	HOLDERMAN, COLIN	R	R	6′ 7″	240	10/08/1995
23	KELLER, MITCH	R	R	6′ 2″	220	04/04/1996
36	MORETA, DAURI	R	R	6′ 2″	185	04/15/1996
48	ORTIZ, LUIS	R	R	6′ 2″	240	01/27/1999
24	OVIEDO, JOHAN	R	R	6′ 5″	245	03/02/1998
46	RAMIREZ, YOHAN	R	R	6′ 4″	212	05/06/1995
52	SELBY, COLIN	R	R	6′2″	220	10/08/1997
43	STEPHENSON, ROBERT	R	R	6′ 3″	205	02/24/1993
56	UNDERWOOD JR., DUANE	R	R	6′ 2″	225	07/20/1994
27	VELASQUEZ, VINCE	R	R	6′ 3″	212	06/07/1992

CATCHERS (2)

#	NAME	B	T	HT	WT	DOB
18	HEDGES, AUSTIN	R	R	6′ 1″	223	08/18/1992
25	RODRÍGUEZ, ENDY	S	R	6′0″	170	05/26/2000

INFIELDERS (10)

#	NAME	B	T	HT	WT	DOB
3	BAE, JI HWAN	L	R	6′1″	185	07/26/1999
14	CASTRO, RODOLFO	S	R	6′0″	205	05/21/1999
91	CHOI, JI MAN	L	R	6′1″	260	05/19/1991
15	CRUZ, ONEIL	L	R	6′ 7″	220	10/04/1998
13	HAYES, KE′BRYAN					
30	MARCANO, TUCUPITA	L	R	6′ 0″	180	09/16/1999
89	MATHIAS, MARK					
60	PEGUERO, LIOVER	R	R	6′ 2″	200	12/31/2000
41	SANTANA, CARLOS	S	R	5′ 11″	215	04/08/1986
19	TRIOLO, JARED	R	R	6′ 3″	212	02/08/1998

OUTFIELDERS (8)

#	NAME	B	T	HT	WT	DOB
2	JOE, CONNOR	R	R	6′ 0″	205	08/16/1992
22	MCCUTCHEN, ANDREW	R	R	5′ 11″	195	10/10/1986
31	MITCHELL, CAL	L	L	6′0″	205	03/08/1999
10	REYNOLDS, BRYAN	S	R	6′ 3″	205	01/27/1995
28	SMITH-NJIGBA, CANAAN	L	R	6′ 0″	230	04/30/1999
65	SUWINSKI, JACK	L	L	6′ 2″	215	07/29/1998
5	SWAGGERTY, TRAVIS	L	L	5′ 10″	200	08/19/1997
38	VILADE, RYAN	R	R	6′ 2″	226	02/18/1999

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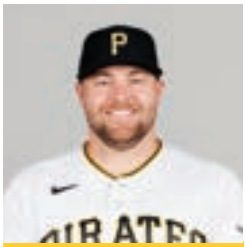
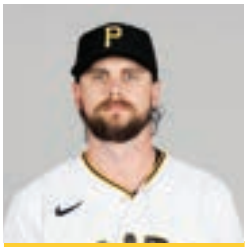
40-MAN ROSTER

JI HWAN BAE
#3 | INF/OF



DAVID BEDNAR
#51 | RHP



JT BRUBAKER
#34 | RHP

MIKE BURROWS
#53 | RHP

RODOLFO CASTRO
#14 | INF

JI MAN CHOI
#91 | INF

ROANSY CONTRERAS
#59 | RHP

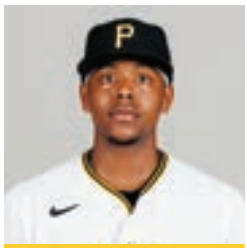
WIL CROWE
#29 | RHP

ONEIL CRUZ
#15 | INF

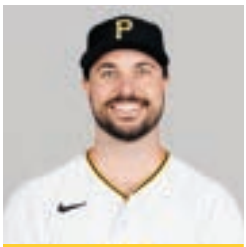
CHASE DE JONG
#37 | RHP

YERRY DE LOS SANTOS
#57 | RHP

JARLÍN GARCÍA
#66 | LHP



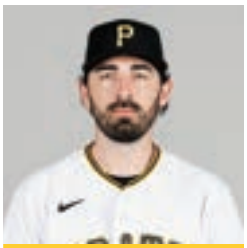
KE'BRYAN HAYES
#13 | INF



AUSTIN HEDGES
#18 | C

JOSE HERNANDEZ
#61 | LHP

RICH HILL
#44 | LHP



COLIN HOLDERMAN
#35 | RHP

CONNOR JOE
#2 | OF/INF

MITCH KELLER
#23 | RHP

MAX KRANICK
#45 | RHP

TUCUPITA MARCANO
#30 | INF/OF

MARK MATHIAS
#89 | INF/OF

ANDREW MCCUTCHEN
#22 | OF

CAL MITCHELL
#31 | OF

DAURI MORETA
#36 | RHP

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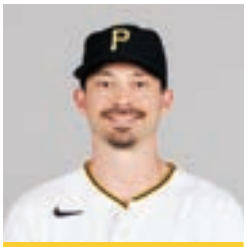
LUIS ORTIZ
#48 | RHP

JOHAN OVIEDO
#24 | RHP

LIOVER PEGUERO
#60 | INF

YOHAN RAMIREZ
#46 | RHP



BRYAN REYNOLDS
#10 | OF

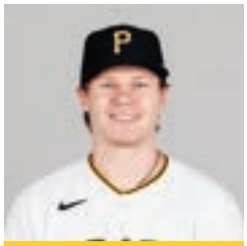
ENDY RODRÍGUEZ
#25 | C

CARLOS SANTANA
#41 | INF

COLIN SELBY
#52 | RHP

CANAAN SMITH-NJIGBA
#28 | OF

ROBERT STEPHENSON
#43 | RHP

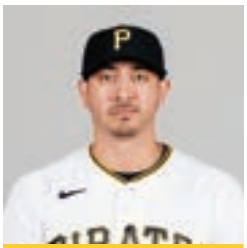


JACK SUWINSKI
#65 | OF

TRAVIS SWAGGERTY
#5 | OF

JARED TRIOLO
#19 | INF

DUANE UNDERWOOD JR.
#56 | RHP



VINCE VELASQUEZ
#27 | RHP

COACHING STAFF

DEREK SHELTON
#17 | MANAGER

DON KELLY
#12 | BENCH COACH

ANDY HAINES
#49 | HITTING COACH

MENDY LOPEZ
#96 | INFIELD COACH

CHRISTIAN MARRERO
#88 | ASST. HITTING

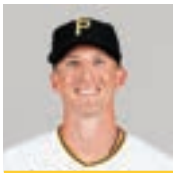
OSCAR MARIN
#47 | PITCHING COACH

TARRIK BROCK
#16 | 1ST BASE COACH

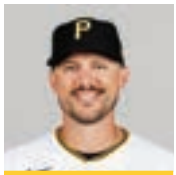
MIKE RABELO
#58 | 3RD BASE COACH

JUSTIN MECCAGE
#87 | BULLPEN COACH

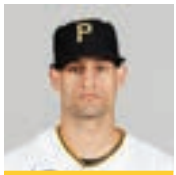
RAUL HERNANDEZ
#90 | BULLPEN CATCHER



RADLEY HADDAD
#86 | GAME PLANNING/STRATEGY COACH



JORDAN COMADENA
#82 | COACHING ASST.



TIM MCKEITHAN
#97 | COACH

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STATE OF THE ART SCOREBOARD, ADDITIONAL UPGRADES TO ENHANCE FAN EXPERIENCE AT PNC PARK

by Jim Lachimia

Pirates fans attending games at PNC Park this season will immediately notice a massive new scoreboard in left field with all the bells and whistles that modern technology makes possible. Among its many impressive features will be a display area twice as large as the previous version, stunningly clear images, and wider viewing angles.

Despite its dominant presence, the new scoreboard will not inhibit the breathtaking view of the Downtown Pittsburgh skyline visitors to the ballpark have come to know and love.

In mid-February this year, the Pirates announced details for the project, which will also include new fascia ribbon boards and a new sound system. The improvements are designed to enhance the fan experience at PNC Park just as new eateries and bars, a larger play area for kids, and displays that celebrate Pirates history did along the outfield concourse last year.

"We know from our many interactions with fans that the way in which they consume game action is ever changing. The new scoreboard, fascia displays, and sound system will allow our fans to be even more immersed in the action on and off the field," Pirates president Travis Williams said. "It is important that we continue to build upon and enhance everything that makes PNC Park a unique and special place. Last offseason (prior to the 2022 campaign), we successfully debuted the revamped River Walk. This season we are excited to unveil additional fan-focused enhancements, beginning with the new sights and sounds our fans will experience."

With its modern 10-millimeter pixel spacing display, resulting in more than 4K pixels in width, the new scoreboard will provide vividly clear imagery for fans throughout the ballpark, even from sharp angles. Additionally, true HDR capability combined with higher brightness will yield vibrant colors and brilliant images, enhancing the action on the field during both day and night games.

In addition, the new fascia ribbon boards will improve the clarity for in-game stats and messaging, as will the new home plate, field level and dugout LED displays. The speaker system has also been replaced with a new version that will provide crisp and consistent audio throughout the ballpark.

The project also included replacement of the video components in the scoreboard control room. Those enhancements will allow for seamless gameday production with the new displays as well as new fixed and wireless cameras that will cover the action more closely.

"There are a lot of different things in the modern era of technology that you're able to bring to the home experience whether you're looking at your device or watching on television. We're bringing that to the in-game experience at the ballpark and enabling our fans to be immersed in that," Williams said. "There's a lot more space for us to display a lot more things — like stats, spray charts that show where hits go, how far home runs travel, the rotation of a pitch, or how much it moves vertically or horizontally. It will allow for many more in-game entertainment elements as well."

"We're going to be able to display those things and more in real time with the push of a button," Pirates vice president of creative and production Jon Willey added. "You'll be able to see what the path was that Bryan Reynolds ran to catch a ball. How fast did he run? How many seconds did it take him to get there? We're going to know the apex of the ball, the exit velocity off the bat. All of that."

"When our guys do something incredible compared to the major-league average — like we know Oneil Cruz has done — we're going to be able to take over the whole screen and really highlight that. You see that when you watch a PGA Tour event (on television), but now on the baseball side, you'll see that information live and in person in real time (on the scoreboard). "

"The board will serve two purposes. It will be informational, and it will be entertainment. It's going to be exciting to be able to provide that to our fans. It's going to be really big, and we have an amazing crew to bring it to them. This is immersing the fans in the show. The new scoreboard and the ribbons and sound system will add to the experience of what PNC Park is — and everybody knows it's the greatest ballpark in America."

The Pirates engaged Warrendale, PA-based Mitsubishi Electric's Diamond Vision Systems to oversee installation of the 83,000-pound scoreboard and the other displays throughout PNC Park. The project was jointly funded by the Pirates and the Sports & Exhibition Authority.

"The Sports & Exhibition Authority, the city of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County worked with us in a public-private partnership to make sure we could bring all of this to life," Williams said. "We also had a lot of consultants on board along the way — WJHW, Mitsubishi and others — who poured in and made sure we have an awesome board for our fans to enjoy."

Since being hired by Pirates chairman Bob Nutting in November of 2019, Williams' top priority has been to strengthen the organization's connection with its fan base. Enhancements to the ballpark — those that have been made and those to come — are major elements of that strategy.

"When I came here, one of the things that Bob and I committed to was making sure we listened to the fans, we heard what they had to say, and we were able to act upon that," Williams said. "All of the improvements we made last offseason and the improvements we're making this year are features our fans will enjoy and that will enhance the experience of coming to PNC Park."

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Additional enhancements have been made elsewhere in the ballpark that will also improve the fan experience in 2023.

For instance:

Evolv Technology will simplify the entry process and reduce the amount of time guests spend in line at the gates. The state-of-the-art screening system uses sensor technology with artificial intelligence to provide accurate threat detection without requiring fans to stop or open bags.

New walkthrough markets will make it easier for fans to purchase ballpark favorites such as hot dogs, nachos, pretzels and beer.

New awnings at Pops Plaza down the left-field line and the Crows Nest down the right-field line will protect fans from the elements.

Mashgin technology — a touchless self-checkout system — will be featured at five different concessions stands to shorten lines and reduce the amount of time fans spend in them. Scan, pay, and be on your way will be the mantra there.

There will also be additional drink rails in various locations, new condiment carts, and digital signage and lighting at concessions locations throughout the ballpark.

Maintaining the renewed emphasis on paying tribute to the history of baseball in Pittsburgh, graphics have been added throughout PNC Park that feature:

Key moments in Pirates history

The five ballparks the Pirates have called home — Recreation Park, Exposition Park, Forbes Field, Three Rivers Stadium, and PNC Park

Pirates yearbook covers through the years

A large recreation of pins that have celebrated great moments in Pirates history

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A wonderful celebration of Pirates baseball took place at PNC Park on September 3 last year. That afternoon the ballclub inducted a 19-member inaugural class into the new Pirates Hall of Fame. Recognition of the distinguished group was also the theme of on-field ceremonies prior to the game against the Toronto Blue Jays that evening.

Selecting an inaugural class was no easy task because a little over 2,000 men have worn a Pirates' uniform since the franchise joined the National League in 1887. That includes batting champions, home run champions, MVPs, Gold Glove Award winners, Cy Young Award winners, 20-game winners, and scores of players who contributed greatly to Pittsburgh's five World Championships. Members of the Homestead Grays and Pittsburgh Crawfords, two of the most successful teams in Negro leagues history, were also eligible for induction.

The inaugural class, as selected by club officials, included Pirates all-time greats Jake Beckley, Steve Blass, Max Carey, Fred Clarke, Roberto Clemente, Ralph Kiner, Bill Mazeroski, Danny Murtaugh, Dave Parker, Willie Stargell, Pie Traynor, Arky Vaughan, Honus Wagner, Lloyd Waner and Paul Waner as well as Ray Brown, Oscar Charleston, Josh Gibson and Buck Leonard of the Crawfords and Grays.

During the festivities on September 3, the Pirates unveiled plaques that celebrate the achievements of each of the 19 honorees. The plaques — styled similarly to those that honor inductees at the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY — will be on display permanently inside PNC Park.

"The Pirates have been part of the fabric of this community since the 1880s, and during that time Pittsburgh has had some of the greatest players that ever played the game and been a part of some of baseball's greatest moments," Pirates chairman Bob Nutting told the audience during the induction ceremonies. "Today this Hall of Fame is dedicated to honoring, remembering, and celebrating those players and their stories.

"And perhaps no other city has a deeper or prouder legacy of Negro leagues baseball. The Crawfords and Grays are both historic teams. They had some of the greatest players from any era or any league. We're proud to recognize and honor them as well, and we fully welcome them into our Pirates family."

The three living members of the inaugural class — Blass, Parker and Mazeroski — were presented with sharp-looking gold jackets during the induction ceremonies. Family members of a dozen other honorees were also in attendance.

"What a great day for the Pirates, Pirates fans, and the city of Pittsburgh," Blass said. "I'm humbled to be included in this first class of the Pirates Hall of Fame. I look around and there's Dave Parker, there's Bill Mazeroski, there's Honus Wagner's granddaughter. This is one of the storied franchises in major league baseball, and I've been lucky to be a part of it for more than 60 years.

"Please keep in mind that next year more players and more plaques will be added with names that are just as impressive and just as meaningful as those that are being acknowledged today."

Sixteen members of the inaugural class of the Pirates Hall of Fame are also enshrined in the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. That list includes Beckley, Brown, Carey, Charleston, Clarke, Clemente, Gibson, Kiner, Leonard, Mazeroski, Stargell, Traynor, Vaughan, Wagner, and the Waner brothers.

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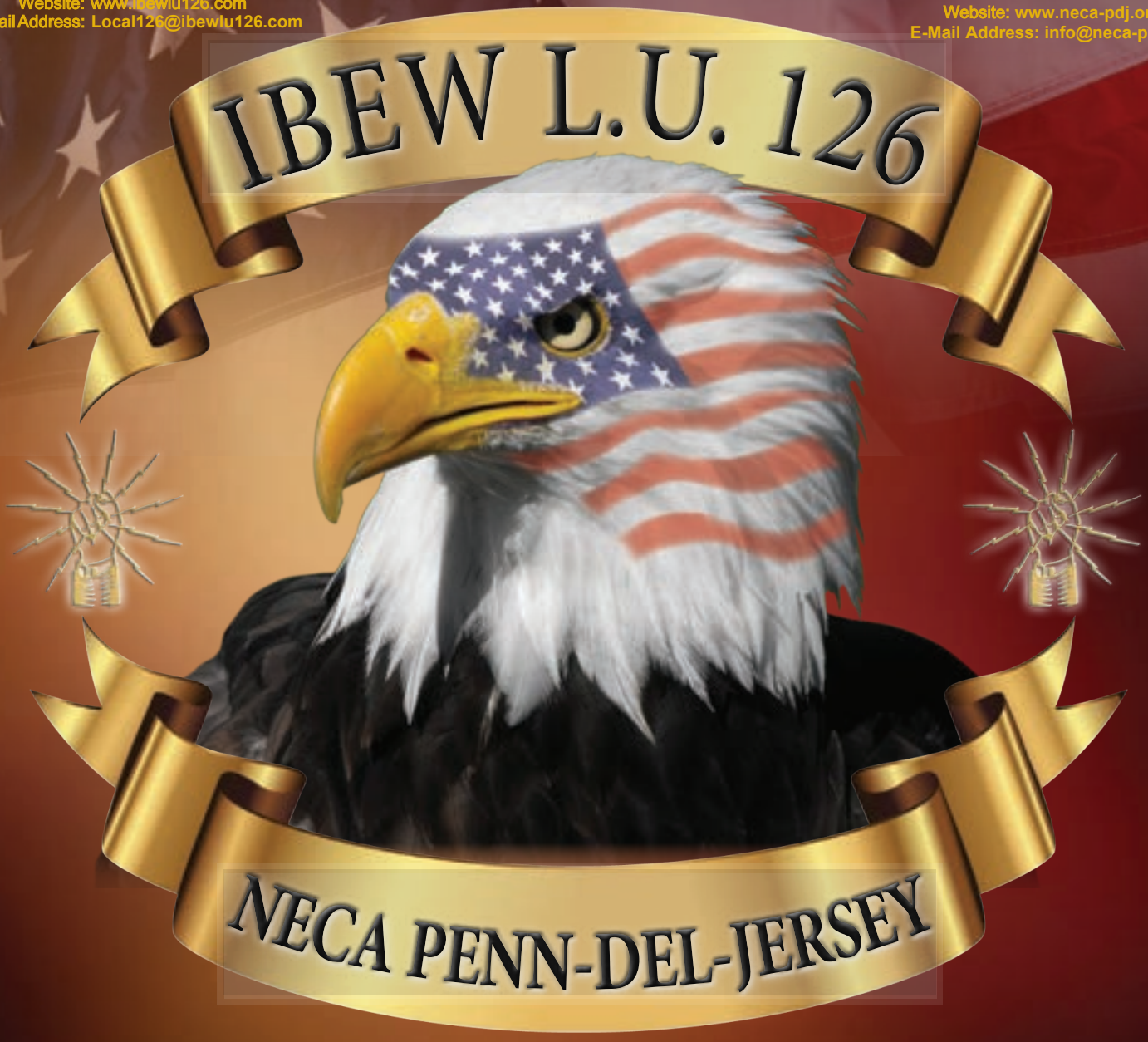

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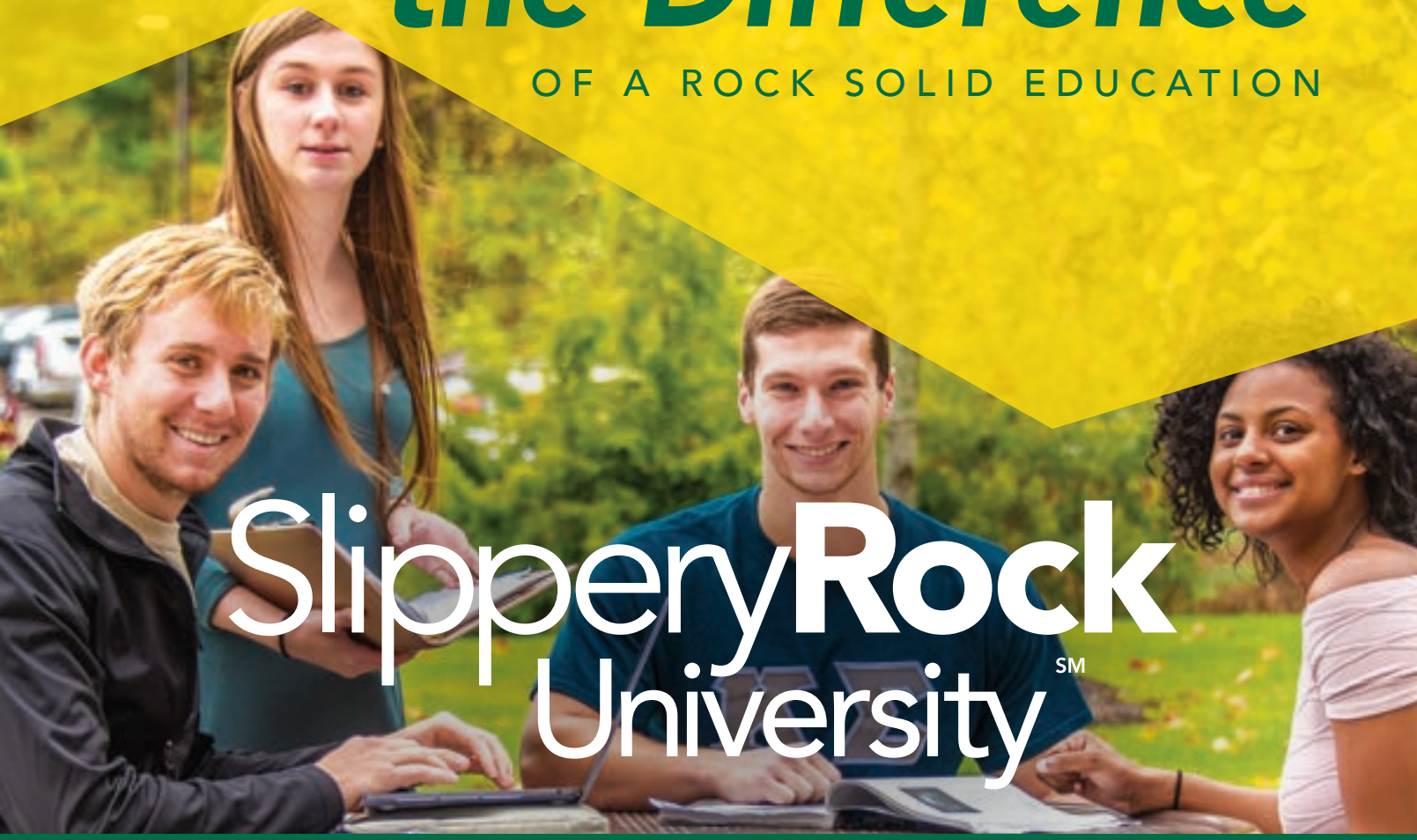

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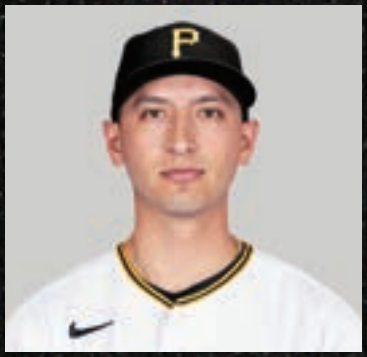

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PIPELINE TO PITTSBURGH

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF JOHN BAKER, THE PIRATES' FARM SYSTEM IS GAINING A REPUTATION AS ONE OF THE BEST IN BASEBALL by Jim Lachimia

John Baker is in his third season as director of coaching and player development for the Pirates. The former major-league catcher is a high-energy guy who loves his job, loves to talk baseball, and has an unquenchable thirst to help the organization become the absolute best that it can be.

Under his direction, players such as pitcher Roansy Contreras, infielders Oneil Cruz and Rodolfo Castro, and outfielder Jack Suwinski recently graduated from the minors to the majors. And other talented players such as pitchers Luis Ortiz and Quinn Priester, catchers Endy Rodriguez and Henry Davis, and infielder-outfielder Ji Hwan Bae aren't far behind them.

Just before the start of spring training this year, it was brought to Baker's attention that The Athletic had recently rated the Pirates' farm system sixth-best among the 30 major-league teams. When asked if he felt it was meaningful to be recognized by such a reputable media outlet for the good work that he and his staff are doing, he offered a great answer.

"Anytime you get positive feedback from outside the organization it puts a smile on your face," Baker said. "But I also know that the men and women I work with in our player development department are not satisfied with being sixth. We want to be first. That's why we show up to work every day.
"Positive feedback from the outside helps us to be more convicted that we're heading in the right direction. But that direction isn't number six for us. It's striving to be number one."

The following question-and-answer session was conducted with Baker in early February this year:

PIRATES MAGAZINE "Is the greatest challenge of player development the fact that you're never done? You can never rest on your laurels? You always need to be working on the next wave of talented players, or the next several waves?"

JOHN BAKER "I don't know that I would say that's the greatest challenge of player development. That's the thing we enjoy the most. It's our purpose. Our purpose is to find the best ways for players to get better and to help players improve as fast as possible and as much as possible. To be good at player development — to be successful — you have to build a department of people that love to learn continuously and love to seek out challenges. 'Okay, this guy has a chance to be in the big leagues. How can we help him do more than he did last year? What do we need to change?' Those are the kinds of things we're constantly talking about. For me, the best part of the job is that the landscape is constantly changing and shifting. No two years are the same. That keeps it fresh and exciting for us."

PIRATES MAGAZINE "Henry Davis and Endy Rodriguez are high-end catching prospects who may not be far from arriving in Pittsburgh. But it's interesting that they have different body types and are different players in some respects. Can you talk about that?"

JOHN BAKER "Well, with Henry being drafted first overall (in 2021) and Endy being our minor-league player of the year last year and having the season that he had, they're two very good baseball players. They have high baseball IQs. That's the first thing I would say. They're two completely different personalities, but at the same time, they share a common value, which is they do whatever it takes to win. They're always thinking about winning, thinking about competing, and they want to be on the field all the time. Henry is big and strong. We're very convicted with the bat, and he's working his tail off to be a great leader on the field. He builds really positive and strong relationships with our pitching staff with every team he plays on. Endy does the same thing in his own way, and he's a bit more of a fluid player where you see that ease of action. Henry is one of the hardest working guys I've ever seen. Not to say that Endy isn't a hard worker. He's an extremely hard worker as well. With the way they approach baseball, they've got a whole lot more in common than it may look like from the outside."

PIRATES MAGAZINE "How satisfying is it to see guys that you and your player development staff have nurtured get

To be successful you have to build a department of people that love to learn continuously and love to seek out challenges.

promoted to the big leagues and have success with Pittsburgh?"

JOHN BAKER "We love to graduate players to the major leagues. It's what we live to do. Those moments are incredibly special to us. That light at the end of the tunnel is always wonderful for us. Our minor-league managers get to tell players they're going to Pittsburgh and they're going to get to go stand by the Clemente Wall. They're going to get to wear a uniform with a lot of history behind it. There's a lot of baseball history in Pittsburgh and they get to become a part of it."

PIRATES MAGAZINE "Quinn Priester, a 22-year-old former No. 1 draft pick, is currently rated the Pirates' top pitching prospect. What do you like about him? What makes him such an intriguing prospect?"

JOHN BAKER "Quinn Priester is a really bright young pitcher. He understands what he needs to do with the baseball. Has an excellent feel to spin the ball. Good command with the curveball and slider. Developing changeup that he threw effectively last year. A four-seamer and a two-seamer. He has the ability to reach back and get the fastball into the upper 90s, but he also has the ability to pitch in all four quadrants of the strike zone. That's the thing that's so exciting about him. And he's got this relentless drive to be the best too. Sandy Alcantara (of the Miami Marlins) won the N.L. Cy Young Award last year, and so that's who he wants to compete with. Sometimes you forget how young he is because of the way he behaves."

PIRATES MAGAZINE "Minor-league managers and coaches are unsung heroes. They're kind of anonymous. Most fans in big-league cities don't know who they are. They don't get a ton of recognition or publicity, but the work they do is vitally important. Isn't it?"

JOHN BAKER "It's incredibly important. Our minor-league managers and coaches love to pore into young people, and they love the game of baseball. Their work goes beyond the numbers that we see on the scorecard or the statistics we can look up the internet. It's about building relationships and growing people. That's how our coaches tend to see themselves — as teachers. Of course, they have aspirations of one day being major-league coaches and we try to help grow them in that direction. But we build a department full of people that want to help young players improve and really get a lot of satisfaction out of seeing that. Minor-league managers and coaches have never gotten, nor will they ever get, the credit they deserve for the impact that they make on the people that you see on television."

PIRATES MAGAZINE "To be successful in player development your work with high-end draft picks is important, but you need to develop a lot more than just those kind of guys. Right?"

JOHN BAKER "Yeah, you do. You have those first-round draft picks and the big investments that organizations make in them and surrounding them with good baseball players only makes them better. While you want to be fundamentally sound and tactically sound, winning in the minor leagues requires having better-than-average players. You can't just run anybody out on the field. But sometimes there are non-drafted free agents we sign. Guys that the organization notices something that we like about them. Then there's this fun kind of experiment. Is this someone we can build into a major-league player? In my experience, those seem to be the most satisfying. The kid that wasn't on anybody's list that becomes a good big-league player. That underdog story is awesome. That's why we make sure we create individualized programming and plans for every player in the organization. Guys know there are ways forward because they're communicated with clearly. The rising tide does lift all boats in this situation because they're learning things that lead to winning baseball and winning baseball players."

MLB PIPELINE RANKS PIRATES TOP PROSPECTS

At the beginning of March this year, MLB Pipeline unveiled its rankings of the finest prospects in the Pirates' minor-league system and the following players appeared in the Top 20. The list includes four former No. 1 draft picks — led by second baseman Termarr Johnson and catcher Henry Davis — and players ranging in age from 18 to 25. In addition, 13 members of the Top 20 were acquired either via the draft or trades since Ben Cherington took over as general manager.

1 TERMARR JOHNSON

POSITION: SECOND BASE
HEIGHT: 5'7" | **WEIGHT:** 175 | **AGE:** 18
BATS: LEFT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Selected fourth overall in the 2022 MLB draft out of Mays (GA) High School...Named the Atlanta Public Schools Player of the Year after batting .561 with 16 extra-base hits and 14 stolen bases as a senior...Made his professional debut in the Florida Complex (Rookie) League and with Bradenton (Low-A), appearing in 23 games.

2 ENDY RODRÍGUEZ

POSITION: CATCHER
HEIGHT: 6'0" | **WEIGHT:** 170 | **AGE:** 22
BATS: SWITCH | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Has had back-to-back outstanding seasons in the Pirates' farm system since being acquired from New York (N.L.) in January of 2021, batting .310 with 40 homers and 168 RBI in 223 games...Named the Pirates' 2022 Minor League Player of the Year after hitting .323 with 25 homers and 95 RBI in 125 games for three different clubs.

3 HENRY DAVIS

POSITION: CATCHER
HEIGHT: 6'2" | **WEIGHT:** 210 | **AGE:** 23
BATS: RIGHT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Selected first overall in the 2021 MLB draft after batting .370 with 15 home runs and 48 RBI in 50 games as a junior at the University of Louisville...Hampered by injuries in two seasons as a pro, but did reach the Double-A level last summer, and then showed well with the Surprise Saguaros in the Arizona Fall League.

4 QUINN PRIESTER

POSITION: PITCHER
HEIGHT: 6'3" | **WEIGHT:** 210 | **AGE:** 22
BATS: RIGHT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Pittsburgh's first-round draft pick in 2019 out of Cary-Grove (IL) High School...Went 7-4 with a 3.04 ERA in 20 starts and struck out 98 batters in 97.2 innings for Greensboro (High-A) in 2021 and was named South Atlantic League Pitcher of the Year...Has fanned 228 batters in 224.2 innings in three seasons in the minor leagues.

5 NICK GONZALES

POSITION: SECOND BASE
HEIGHT: 5'10" | **WEIGHT:** 195 | **AGE:** 23
BATS: RIGHT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Pirates 2020 first-round draft pick out of New Mexico State University...Led the NCAA with a .432 batting average in 2019 and in homers (12) and RBI (36) during the pandemic-shortened 2020 season...South Atlantic League All-Star in 2021 after hitting .302 with 18 homers and 54 RBI in 80 games at Greensboro (High-A).

6 LIOVER PEGUERO

POSITION: SHORTSTOP
HEIGHT: 6'2" | **WEIGHT:** 200 | **AGE:** 22
BATS: RIGHT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Acquired from Arizona in the Starling Marte deal in January of 2020...Appeared in 90 games for Greensboro (High-A) in 2021 and batted .270 with 35 extra-base hits (19 doubles, two triples, 14 homers) and 45 RBI...Hit .259 for Altoona (AA) last season and led the ballclub in games played (121), hits (125) and stolen bases (28).

7 BUBBA CHANDLER

POSITION: PITCHER
HEIGHT: 6'2" | **WEIGHT:** 200 | **AGE:** 20
BATS: SWITCH | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Third-round draft pick in 2021 out of North Oconee (GA) High School where he starred in football (quarterback) and baseball...With the Florida Complex (Rookie) League Pirates and Bradenton (Low-A) in 2022, he had a 2.61 ERA in 14 games and fanned 60 batters in 41.1 innings...Also started 30 games at DH last year, but is expected to pitch full-time in 2023.

8 LUIS ORTIZ

POSITION: PITCHER
HEIGHT: 6'2" | **WEIGHT:** 240 | **AGE:** 24
BATS: RIGHT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Native of the Dominican Republic signed as a non-drafted free agent in 2018...Was second among Pirates farmhands with 113 strikeouts in 2021...Fanned 138 batters in 124.1 innings in 26 games for Altoona (AA) and Indianapolis (AAA) in 2022...Allowed only five hits and two earned runs in three starts for Pittsburgh last September.

9 MIKE BURROWS

POSITION: PITCHER
HEIGHT: 6'2" | **WEIGHT:** 195 | **AGE:** 23
BATS: RIGHT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Pittsburgh's 11th-round draft pick in 2018...In 13 starts for Greensboro (High-A) in 2021, he had a 2.20 ERA, fanned 66 batters in 49 innings and limited the opposition to a .143 average...Was 5-6 with a 4.01 ERA in 24 games (22 starts) for Altoona (AA) and Indianapolis (AAA) last year, striking out 111 batters in 94.1 innings.

10 ANTHONY SOLOMETO

POSITION: PITCHER
HEIGHT: 6'5" | **WEIGHT:** 220 | **AGE:** 20
BATS: LEFT | **THROWS:** LEFT

Second-round draft pick in 2021 out of Bishop Eustace (NJ) Prep...Went 4-0 with an 0.21 ERA and struck out 64 batters in 32.2 innings as a senior...Chose signing with the Pirates over a scholarship offer from the University of North Carolina ...Went 5-1 with a 2.64 ERA in 13 games (eight starts) for Bradenton (Low-A) last year.

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MLB PIPELINE RANKS PIRATES TOP PROSPECTS

11 JARED JONES

POSITION: PITCHER
HEIGHT: 6'1" | **WEIGHT:** 180 | **AGE:** 21
BATS: LEFT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Pittsburgh's second-round draft pick in 2020 out of La Mirada (CA) High School...Made his pro debut with Bradenton (Low-A) in 2021, appearing in 18 games (15 starts)...Led the Greensboro (High-A) staff in starts (26), innings pitched (122.2) and strikeouts (142) in 2022...Also led the South Atlantic League in strikeouts.

12 THOMAS HARRINGTON

POSITION: PITCHER
HEIGHT: 6'2" | **WEIGHT:** 185 | **AGE:** 21
BATS: RIGHT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Campbell University standout was selected by Pittsburgh with a competitive balance pick at No. 36 overall last summer...Led the NCAA with 12 victories last year...Also set a Campbell school record in that department and was named Big South Conference Pitcher of the Year...Fanned 111 batters in 92.2 innings in 15 starts.

13 JI HWAN BAE

POSITION: SECOND BASE
HEIGHT: 6'1" | **WEIGHT:** 185 | **AGE:** 23
BATS: LEFT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Excelled for Indianapolis (AAA) in 2022, batting .289 in 108 games and leading the club in hits (121), run scored (81) and stolen bases (30)...Also went 11-for-33 (.333) in 10 games with Pittsburgh...Native of South Korea signed with the Pirates in 2018 at age 18...Has compiled a .294 batting average in four years in the minors.

14 LONNIE WHITE JR.

POSITION: OUTFIELDER
HEIGHT: 6'3" | **WEIGHT:** 212 | **AGE:** 20
BATS: RIGHT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Originally committed to play football (wide receiver) and baseball at Penn State University before signing with the Pirates in 2021 (compensation round pick at No. 64 overall)...Was a three-sport athlete (also basketball) at Malvern (PA) Prep...Has appeared in only 11 games in two seasons as a professional because of injuries.

15 HUNTER BARCO

POSITION: PITCHER
HEIGHT: 6'4" | **WEIGHT:** 210 | **AGE:** 22
BATS: LEFT | **THROWS:** LEFT

Selected by Pittsburgh in the second round of the 2022 draft despite his junior year at the University of Florida being cut short by an elbow injury that required Tommy John surgery...Went 10-3 with a 4.01 ERA in 16 starts as a sophomore for the Gators and 17-5 with a 3.18 ERA in 30 games over three years (189 strikeouts in 152.2 innings).

16 MALCOM NUÑEZ

POSITION: FIRST BASE
HEIGHT: 5'11" | **WEIGHT:** 205 | **AGE:** 21
BATS: RIGHT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Acquired from St. Louis along with pitcher Johan Oviedo last summer...Native of Cuba hit a combined .262 with 23 homers and 88 RBI in 119 games with three minor-league clubs last year...Made spectacular pro debut in 2018, batting .415 with 13 homers and 59 RBI in 44 games in the Dominican Summer League at the age of 17.

17 MATT GORSKI

POSITION: OUTFIELDER
HEIGHT: 6'4" | **WEIGHT:** 198 | **AGE:** 25
BATS: RIGHT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Indiana University product was Pittsburgh's second-round draft choice in 2019...Batted .356 and was first-team All-Big 10 Conference as a sophomore for the Hoosiers...Finished third among Pirates minor leaguers with 24 home runs last year despite suffering a torn quad muscle at the end of June and appearing in only 81 games.

18 JARED TRIOLO

POSITION: INFIELDER
HEIGHT: 6'3" | **WEIGHT:** 212 | **AGE:** 25
BATS: RIGHT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Compensation pick by Pittsburgh in 2019 at No. 72 overall after three seasons at the University of Houston...Batted a team-high .344 for the Cougars as a sophomore and .332 as a junior...Received a Rawlings Minor League Gold Glove Award for third basemen in 2021...Also hit .304 in 108 games for Greensboro (High-A) that season.

19 DARIEL LOPEZ

POSITION: INFIELDER
HEIGHT: 6'1" | **WEIGHT:** 185 | **AGE:** 21
BATS: RIGHT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Native of the Dominican Republic signed as a non-drafted free agent in 2018...Made his pro debut in 2019 when he hit .341 in 47 games in the Dominican Summer League...Spent the 2022 season with Greensboro (High-A) and hit .286 with 19 home runs and 58 RBI in 102 games...Saw action at second base, third base and shortstop.

20 KYLE NICOLAS

POSITION: PITCHER
HEIGHT: 6'4" | **WEIGHT:** 223 | **AGE:** 24
BATS: RIGHT | **THROWS:** RIGHT

Ball State University product was acquired in the November 2021 deal that sent Jacob Stallings to the Marlins...Spent the 2022 campaign with Altoona (AA)...Has gone 8-8 with a 4.08 ERA in 45 games (42 starts) in two years as a professional...Also fanned 237 batters in 189.2 innings and limited the opposition to a .216 batting average.

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INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE

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Victory Field
Indianapolis, IN

MANAGER
Miguel Perez

COACHES
Dan Meyer
Eric Munson
Brady Conlan
Drew Benes

2022 RECORD
74-75 (4th in West)

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ALTOONA CURVE
EASTERN LEAGUE

HOME
Peoples Natural
Gas Field
Altoona, PA

MANAGER
Callix Crabbe

COACHES
Jon Nunnally
Blake Butler
Cale Johnson
Gary Green

2022 RECORD
71-66 (3rd in Southwest)

ALTOONACURVE.COM

GREENSBORO GRASSHOPPERS
SOUTH ATLANTIC LEAGUE

HOME
First National
Bank Field
Greensboro, NC

MANAGER
Robby Hammock

COACHES
Fernando Nieve
Ruben Gotay
Justin Orton
Collin Wilber

2022 RECORD
58-70 (5th in North)

MILB.COM/GREENSBORO

BRADENTON MARAUDERS
FLORIDA STATE LEAGUE

HOME
LECOM Park
Bradenton, FL

MANAGER
Jonathan Johnston

COACHES
Casey Harms
Gustavo Omana
Matt Ford
Quentin Brown

2022 RECORD
67-62 (2nd in West)

MILB.COM/BRADENTON

FCL PIRATES
FLORIDA COMPLEX LEAGUE

HOME
Pirate City
Bradenton, FL

MANAGERS
Jim Horner

COACHES
Gavi Nivar
Curt Wilson
Jonathan Prieto
Ernesto Irizarry
Renny Duarte
Mick Fieldbinder
Khelyn Smith

2022 RECORD
30-25 (3rd in South)

PIRATES.COM

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Pirates DSL Academy
Santo Domingo, D.R.

MANAGERS
Jose Mendez
Ethan Goforth

COACHES
Jose Cueto
Alessandro Maestri
Sammy Gonzalez
Gustavo Polanco
Leo Perez
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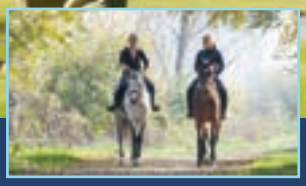

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WEST VIRGINIA

BROADCAST TEAM

During the 2023 season, Greg Brown and Joe Block will again serve as the Pirates' play-by-play announcers, calling the action for games televised on AT&T SportsNet Pittsburgh and carried on flagship radio station 93.7 The Fan and the Pirates Radio Network. Bob Walk and John Wehner return as color analysts and three other former Pirates — Matt Capps, Neil Walker and Kevin Young — will also perform in that role on a rotating basis.

Brown is in his 30th season as a Pirates' play-by-play man. Only Lanny Frattare (33 years, 1976-2008) called more games in that capacity for Pittsburgh than Brown, who has described the action of well over 4,000 contests.

Known for his outgoing personality and tremendous passion for the Pirates, the Emmy Award-winning Brown has made the phrase "Raise the Jolly Roger" synonymous with Bucco victories and "Clear the Deck, Cannon Ball Comin'" his signature home run call.

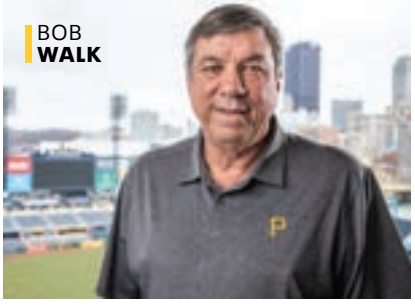
Brown's association with the Pirates began during the 1979 World Championship season when he interned in the promotions department while attending Point Park College. He enjoyed a 10-year stint in the team's front office that also included work in the sales, public relations, and broadcasting departments.

Prior to joining the Pirates' broadcast team in 1994, Brown spent five years doing play-by-play and color commentary for the Buffalo Bison (1989-1993), which was Pittsburgh's Triple-A farm club. The native of Washington, DC, also served as a radio color analyst and pre- and post-game host for the NFL's Buffalo Bills those five years.

Regarding his longevity as a Pirates broadcaster, Brown said: "It's hard to comprehend that I've been doing this job for that long. If 1994-Greg Brown was told he was going to be broadcasting for the Pirates for 30 years, I would have said, 'That's impossible. No way.' I'm humble, and still so thankful that the Pirates gave me the chance to live my dream."

Block is in his eighth season as a member of the Pirates' broadcast crew, having come aboard in 2016, and has called baseball action for 21 years. He did radio play by play for the Milwaukee Brewers for four years (2012-2015).

Block also called nine seasons of minor-league baseball in places such as Billings, MT; Great Falls, MT; Jacksonville, FL; St. Paul, MN; and Charleston, SC. The graduate of Michigan State University also has broadcasting work with the Los Angeles Dodgers, New Orleans Hornets, Montreal Expos, and various regional TV sports networks on his resume.



CLEAR THE DECK

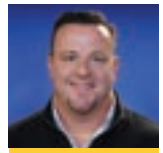
CANNON BALL COMIN'

Walk is in his 30th season as a Pirates color analyst, having joined the broadcast crew in 1994. The former pitcher spent 10 of his 14 major-league seasons with Pittsburgh (1984-1993). He compiled a 105-81 lifetime record (82-61 as a Pirate) and was a member of the National League All-Star team in 1988.

His finest moment as a Pirate came when he registered a 7-1, complete-game victory over the Atlanta Braves in Game Five of the 1992 NLCS at Three Rivers Stadium. Walk made his big-league debut with the Philadelphia Phillies in 1980 when he posted 11 victories and started Game One of the World Series against the Kansas City Royals.

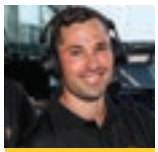
Wehner, a Pittsburgh native and Carrick High School graduate, is in his 19th year as a color analyst for the Pirates, having joined the crew in 2005. The former infielder has now spent 32 seasons in the organization, including nine as a player (1991-1996, 1999-2001). He played baseball at Indiana University for three seasons before being selected by Pittsburgh in the seventh round of the 1988 MLB draft.

In 1997, Wehner was a member of the Florida Marlins' World Championship squad that was managed by Jim Leyland. During his second tour of duty with the Pirates, he hit the final home run in the history of Three Rivers Stadium — on October 1, 2000.


MATT CAPPS

This is **Capps'** third year as a color analyst for the Pirates. He also spent two seasons as a pre- and post-game studio host on AT&T SportsNet Pittsburgh (2018-2019). The native of Douglasville, GA, was selected by Pittsburgh in the seventh round of the 2002 MLB draft out of Alexander (GA) High School.

Capps established himself with Pittsburgh in 2006 when he went 9-1 in 85 games, which is still a club record for most appearances by a rookie. After registering 27 saves in his final year with the Pirates in 2009, Capps split the 2010 campaign between the Washington Nationals and Minnesota Twins and collected a career-high 42 saves. He appeared in 444 games and recorded 138 saves (67 as a Pirate) during his eight-year major-league career (2005-2012) and was an N.L. All-Star in 2010.



NEIL **WALKER**

Walker is in his second full season as a color analyst. The former Pine-Richland (PA) High School star was Pittsburgh's first-round draft pick in 2004. He became the team's starting second baseman in 2010 and spent six seasons in that role. In 2014, Walker was named to the N.L. Silver Slugger squad after he batted .271 with 23 homers and 76 RBI in 137 games.

Walker also played for the New York Mets, Milwaukee Brewers, New York Yankees, Miami Marlins and Philadelphia Phillies during his 12 seasons in the big leagues (2009-2020). In 1,306 career games, he batted .267 with 238 doubles, 149 home runs and 609 RBI.

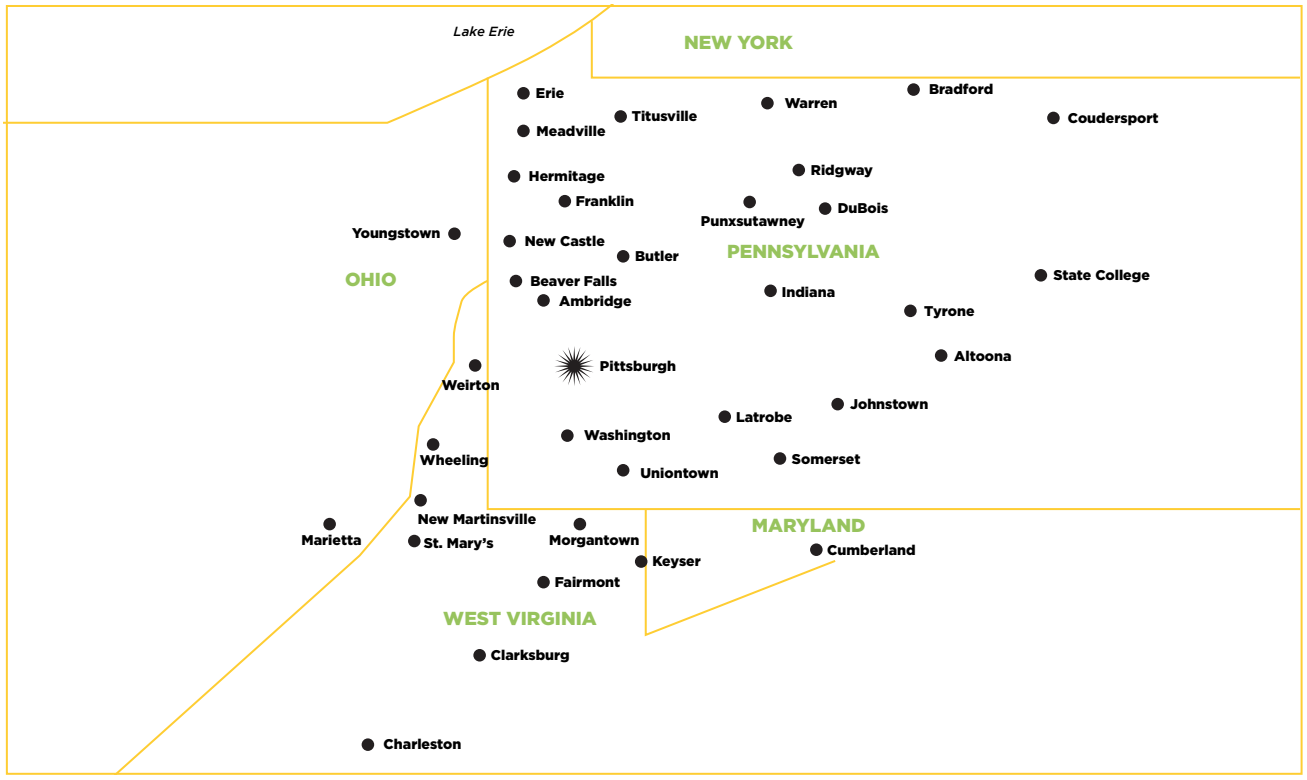
KEVIN **YOUNG**

In addition to his role as a special assistant in the Pirates' baseball operations department, **Young** is now in his third season as one of the team's color analysts. Pittsburgh selected him in the seventh round of the 1990 MLB draft after he was an All-American at both Kansas City (KS) Community College and the University of Southern Mississippi. The former first baseman, who spent 11 years with the Pirates (1992-1995 and 1997-2003), posted back-to-back seasons with more than 25 homers and 100 RBI in 1998 and 1999.

Young was Pittsburgh's Minor League Player of the Year in 1991 before making his major-league debut the following season. He appeared in a total of 1,022 games at first base for Pittsburgh and ranks third on the club's all-time list for games played at that position behind Gus Suhr (1,339) and Jake Beckley (1,045). Young, who also played for the Kansas City Royals (1996), finished his career with 144 home runs, 606 RBI and a .258 lifetime batting average.

PIRATES RADIO NETWORK AFFILIATES

37 STATION NETWORK



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Pittsburgh	KDKA 93.7 FM
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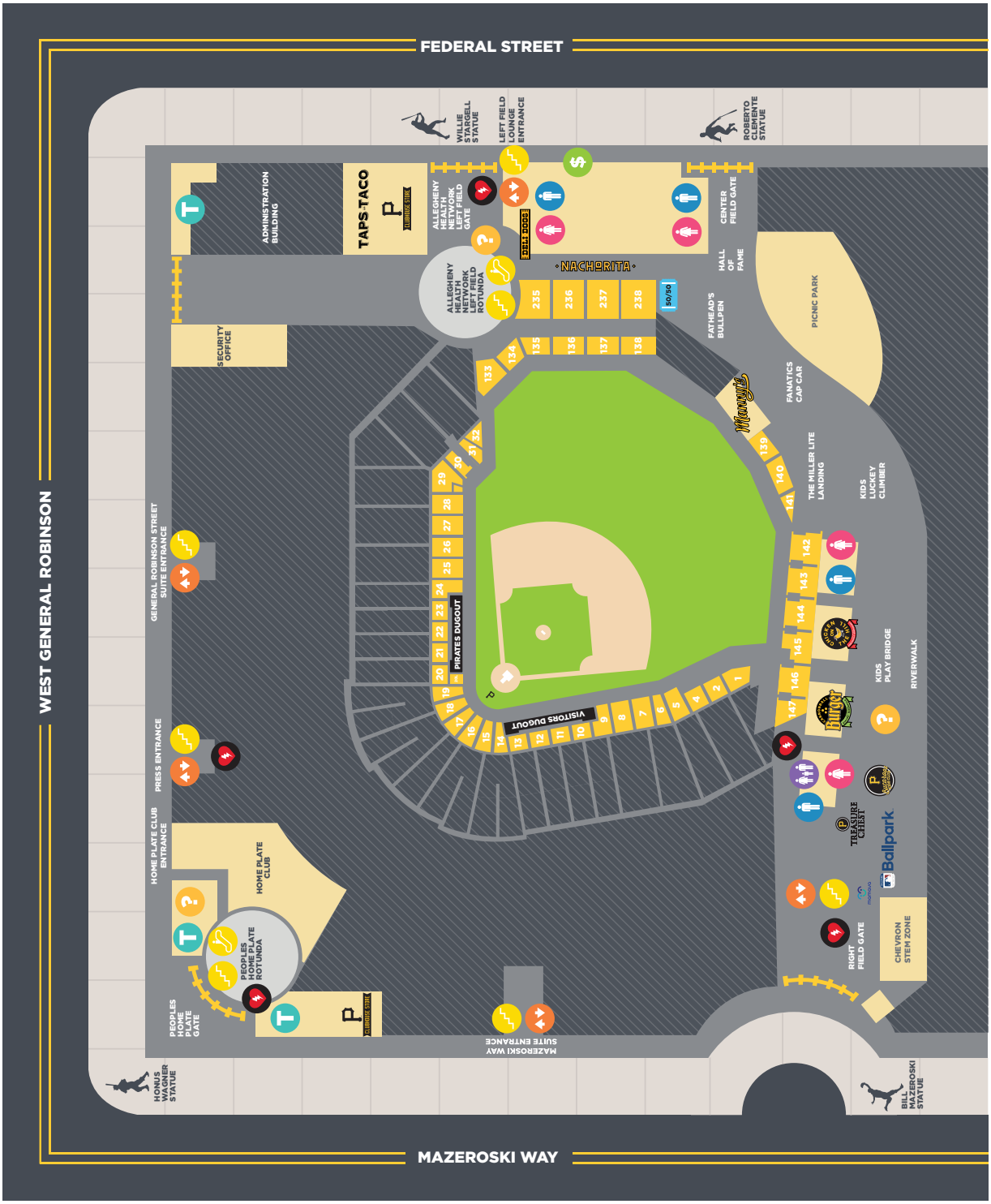

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CONCESSIONS MAP

MAIN CONCOURSE

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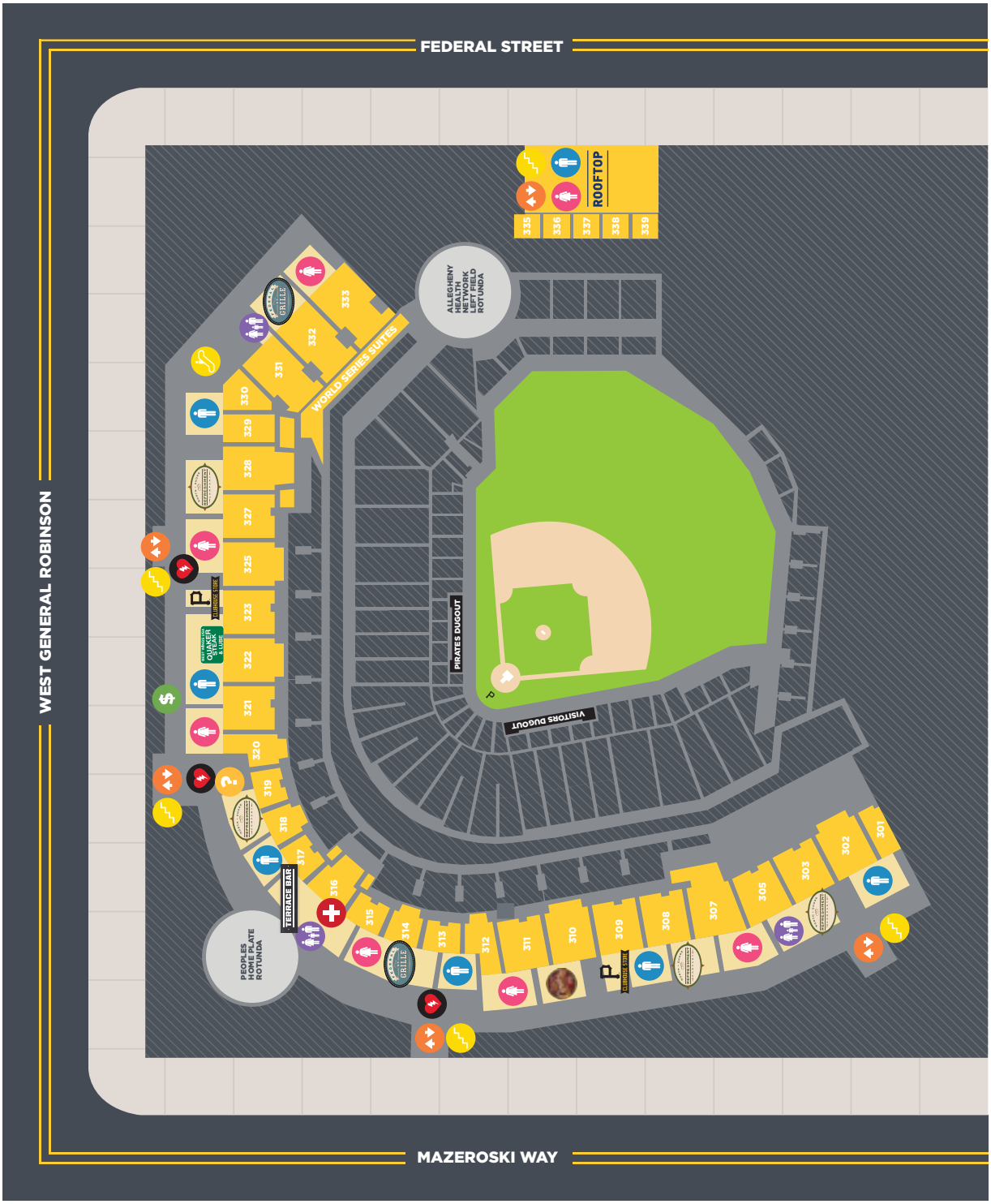
CLUBHOUSE STORE
A Fanatics Experience

PNC PARK

CONCESSIONS MAP

UPPER LEVEL



KEY

CANNONBALL BURGER

Menu inspired by Station in Bloomfield. Stand located underneath section 146.

CHICKEN ON THE HILL

Shelves and shelves of your favorite canned beers available at this grab-and-go.

COLD BEER HERE

Shelves and shelves of your favorite canned beers available at this grab-and-go.

COOKIE & CREAMERY

A variety of ice cream creations like the-fan favorite the Helmet Cookie Sundae.

CROW'S NEST

This patio area has a view of the city skyline and features the Arnold Palmer Spiked Bar, serving beer, wine and soda. Also visit Pittsburgh staples Primanti's and Quaker Steak & Lube.

DELI DOGS

Menu inspired by Smallman Street Deli in the Strip District. Stand located in the left field rotunda near sections 133 and 134.

FEDERAL STREET GRILLE

Exhibition-style grilled items. Located near sections 115, 120, 127, 314, and 332.

LEFT FIELD LOUNGE

Pick up appetizers and entrée items with seating and standing room available.

MANNY'S BBQ AND MARKET

A space honoring Manny Sanguillen through BBQ offerings and packaged beer products. Behind the batter's eye near Picnic Park.

THE MARKET

A unique grab & go location featuring carvery station, salads, snacks and more.

SKULL BAR

Full-service bar and general concession items are open to all Guests.

NACHORITA

A variety of loaded nachos accompanied by margaritas and packaged beer products. Under the left field bleachers behind section 136 and 137.

NORTH SHORE REFRESHMENT COMPANY

Traditional ballpark favorites.

POPS' PLAZA

Food court with PA Craft, Chicken-on-the-Hill, Familee BBQ, Chickie's and Pete's, and Cold Beer Here.

PRIMANTI BROS.

A Pittsburgh tradition — enjoy a Primanti Bros Almost Famous sandwich!

QUAKER STEAK & LUBE

Pick up a bucket of wings and choose from five different sauces available.

RIVERWALK GRILL

Signature footlong hot dogs and sausages.

SWEET SPOT

Hand-dipped and soft-served ice cream.

TAPS AND TACO

Eat tacos. Drink beer.

TERRACE BAR

Located on the upper concourse, this full service bar offers a variety of wines, mixed drinks and craft beers.

- GUEST RELATIONS
- TICKETS
- ATM MACHINE
- REVERSE ATM MACHINE
- WOMEN'S RESTROOM
- MEN'S RESTROOM
- FAMILY RESTROOM
- ADULT SIZE CHANGING TABLE
- STAIRS
- ESCALATORS
- ELEVATOR
- FIRST AID
- AED
- SECURITY
- REDEMPTION AREA
- 50/50 LOCATIONS
- HUNT AUCTIONS
- PIRATES CLUBHOUSE STORE
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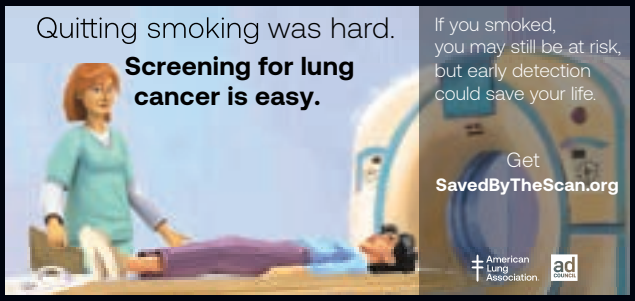
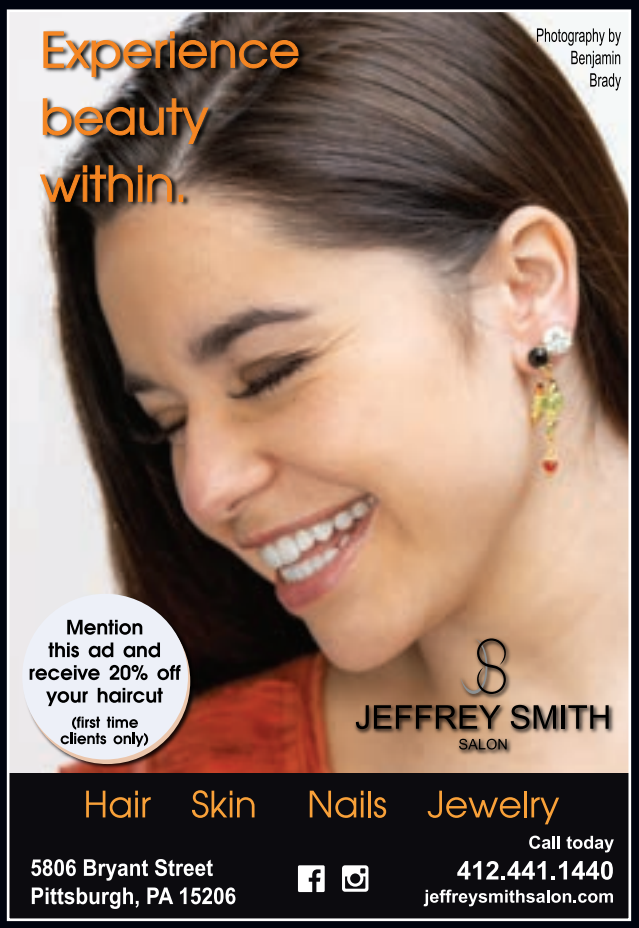


Reach out to a friend about their mental health.

Find more ways to help at SeizeTheAwkward.org

SEIZE THE AWKWARD ad COUNCIL American Foundation for Suicide Prevention JED The Jed Foundation



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A

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE POLICIES

Guests who appear to be under the age of 30

are required to show valid photo ID indicating legal proof of age when purchasing alcohol inside the ballpark. Alcoholic beverage sales are limited to two (2) alcoholic beverages per person, per ID, per transaction. Alcohol sales will be discontinued at the end of the 7th inning at all, vendor and concession stands. The Miller Lite Skull Bar, Crow's Nest, Miller Lite Landing, Fatheads Bullpen Bar, Left Field Lounge, and Terrace Bar will continue to serve alcohol until the end of the game. The Pirates and Game Day Security Team Members reserve the right to remove any Guest who appears visibly intoxicated or is being unruly or disruptive due to his or her intoxication. The Pirates also reserve the right to deny admission to any individual who appears intoxicated during his or her entry into PNC Park. The Pirates and concessions vendors also reserve the right to deny alcoholic beverage service to any Guest who appears intoxicated.

ANIMALS

Guests with a disability may be accompanied by a service animal during an event at PNC Park. For those Guests interested in attending a game with a dog that is not a service animal, the Pirates offer specifically designated "Pup Nights" at PNC Park. For more information, please call 1-800-BUY-BUCS (1-800-289-2927) or visit pirates.com/pups.

AUTOMOBILE ASSISTANCE

Guest Relations will called AAA if requested. Please see a Guest Relations representative or stop by the nearest Guest Relations location. Guests may also contact AAA directly by phoning (412) 362-1900.

B

BANNERS/SIGNS

The Pirates welcome signs and banners. To ensure that these articles do not pose a safety risk or detract from the enjoyment of other guests, the Pirates request you adhere to the following guidelines:

Please do not place banners/signs in the eyesight of the batter, hang over the outfield fences or behind foul poles. Banners should in no way infringe on the sightlines of players, umpires or other PNC Park Guests. The banners/signs must be 4' x 8'or smaller in size. Banners/signs may not be placed anywhere inside the playing field, and may not contain any messages or images determined by the Pirates to be commercial, political, derogatory or obscene as determined by the Pirates.

The Pirates reserve the right to remove any banner/sign that violates these guidelines.

BREAK IN PLAY POLICY

To minimize disruption to our seated guests, the pirates request that whenever feasible, fans with tickets in the lower bowl (Sections 101-132) return to their seats between batters or during a stoppage in play.

BAG POLICY

Each guest is permitted to bring one bag into the ballpark (purses, fanny packs, backpacks, etc.) provided that the bag is soft-sided and 16" x 16" x 8" or smaller. Bags exceeding these dimensions will not be permitted inside the ballpark.

C

CAMERAS AND VIDEO RECORDERS

Guests are welcome to bring cameras and video recorders (not in hard-sided cases) into the ballpark for personal use only. Commercial use of photos without the expressed written consent of the Pirates is prohibited. Fans are requested to avoid standing in the aisles while using this equipment. Guests should not obstruct the views of others while taking pictures and refrain from using tri-pods and monopods. The Pirates reserve the right to remove any Guests that do not cooperate with this policy.

CHEVRON STEM ZONE

Future Bucs can take a break from the action at the Chevron STEM Zone located at the Right Field Gate. The STEM Zone features a miniature PNC Park configuration, multi-purpose play set, various STEM learning interactive exhibits, VR home run derby and pitching metrics cage, and a broadcast booth where kids can call classic Pirates moments. Children ages five through ten are permitted and must be accompanied by an adult. For the safety of all of our young guests, Pirates Team Members may close the area during inclement weather.

CHILD ADMITTANCE

PNC Park offers complimentary admission to children 2 years old and under. However, we do request that these children sit in their parent or guardian's lap and not occupy an additional seat. Promotional giveaway items are only available for ticketed Guests. Children's ticket prices are available in certain sections of PNC Park. See individual ticket prices for more information.

D

DESIGNATED DRIVER PROGRAM

The Designated Driver Program is presented by Miller Lite and Aramark. Registrants for the Designated Driver Program must be 21 years of age and have a valid Driver's License.

For more information, please visit the Designated Driver booth near Section 101.

DEROGATORY LANGUAGE – ABUSIVE FAN BEHAVIOR

The Pirates are committed to maintaining an environment free from harassment, and strictly prohibit the use of Derogatory Language by any guest, employee or visitor to PNC Park. Derogatory Language is the use of offensive language concerning another individual's, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, gender, genetics, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or marital, familial or disability status or status as a covered Veteran or any other status protected by law. Each complaint of abusive fan behavior based on the use of Derogatory Language will be promptly investigated and personswho are credibly found to have violated this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including ejection from the game and potential ban from PNC Park at the discretion of the Pirates.
Guests, employees and other visitors to PNC Park may report an individual's use of Derogatory Language as follows:

1. Texting SECURITY to 61592 with their seat location;
2. Reporting an issue of Derogatory Language to a Pirates employee; and/or
3. Reporting an issue of Derogatory Language to an Aramark or Fanatics employee.

DISABILITY SERVICES

The Pirates are committed to providing every Guest with a comfortable and enjoyable experience at the ballpark, including those Guests with disabilities.

To accommodate our Guests with disabilities, PNC Park offers the following:

- Drop-off zones located near the ballpark along Mazeroski Way and West General Robinson Street.
- Parking for Guests with disabilities in all Pirates parking lots surrounding PNC Park. This parking is available on a first-come first-served basis. Call ALCO Parking Corporation at (412) 323-4455 for more information.
- Accessible seating options throughout the ballpark. If an exchange is required for an accessible seating location, please visit any ticket window or visit the Guest Relations office at the base of the Peoples Home Plate Rotunda.
- Assisted listening devices available upon request at the Guest Relations office at the base of the Peoples Home Plate Rotunda.
- Open captioned scoreboard to accommodate Guests with hearing impairments.
- Elevators conveniently located throughout the ballpark (see map).
- Guests in need of a wheelchair can request wheelchair services from any Pirates employee throughout the ballpark. Guests can also contact any Guest Relations staff member for assistance.

The PNC Park event staff is ready to help with any questions you may have about access to and within PNC Park. While attending events at the ballpark, please contact a member of our Guest Relations staff for assistance or information. When away from the ballpark, please phone 1-800-BUY-BUCS for disability access information.

F

FAMILY RESTROOMS

For the convenience of our Guests, Family Restrooms are located on each level of PNC Park. Smoking is not permitted in these locations or throughout the ballpark. All Family Restrooms are accessible for our Guests with disabilities.

- Main Concourse: Pops' Plaza (near Section 132); near Sections 115 and 119; Crow's Nest (Section 112)
- Club Level: near World Series Suite 1979; near Sections 222/223, 209/210; and near Section 201
- Upper Concourse: near Sections 305, 316 and 331
- Outfield/Riverwalk: near Section 146 and 133; right field handicap access ramp
- Adult Size Changing Table is located inside the Family Restroom at Crow's Nest near Section 112.

FAN INTERFERENCE

In the interest of player and Guest safety, PNC Park maintains a zero tolerance policy regarding fan interference with a ball in play or a player during the game. Failure to comply with the policy will result in immediate removal from PNC Park and potential criminal sanctions.

FOUL BALLS

Guests are welcome to keep any foul ball hit into the stands. At no time should a foul or home run ball be thrown back on the field. Violators will be subject to ejection at the Club's discretion. Any Guest interfering with a ball in play will also be subject to ejection at the Club's discretion. Unfortunately, the Pirates are not able to accommodate requests for player autographs of foul balls.

G

GATES OPEN

Gates open one and one half hours (1 1/2) prior to game time and two hours on Opening Day. 6:35pm Monday - Thursday gates are 1 hr. and 6:35pm Friday - Saturday gates are 1 1/2 hrs The Home Plate Club will open two (2) hours prior to game time.

GUEST CONDUCT

Guests must refrain from conduct that is inconsistent with a safe and enjoyable atmosphere at PNC Park, including but not limited to:

- Interfering with other Guests ability to enjoy the game;
- Using foul, derogatory, or abusive language and/or gestures;
- Appearing to be in an impaired or intoxicated capacity;
- Using tobacco products of any kind, including e-cigarettes & smokeless tobacco;
- Failing to produce a ticket on request or sitting in a seat which is not ticketed
- Being in possession of certain items that are not permitted within PNC Park, including but not limited to balloons, Bluetooth speaker,drones, fireworks, footballs, Frisbee discs, glass bottles, hoverboards, inflatable balls, laser pointers, motorcycle helmets, outside alcoholic beverages, weapons of any kind, or other item determined by the Pirates to be hazardous or disruptive;
- Interfering with the progress of the game, a ball in play or throwing objects onto or entering the playing field.-
- Wearing clothing which, in the judgment of the Pirates, is indecent or otherwise detracts from the experience of other Guests.

Violators may be subject to ejection and/or possible arrest.

GUEST RELATIONS

Guests may seek assistance from any PNC Park Team Member. Guest Relations presented by the Bradenton Area Convention and Visitors Bureau locations can be found throughout the ballpark and are open at least one and one-half hours (1 1/2) prior to each game and 30 minutes after each game. Guest Relations locations are as follows:

- Guest Relations Office: at the bottom of Peoples Home Plate Rotunda
- Upper Kiosk: near Section 319 at the Peoples Rotunda
- Information Kiosks: near Left Field Rotunda
- Main Concourse Kiosk: near Section 116

K

KIDS IDENTIFICATION BRACELETS

Young children attending Pirates games may obtain a free ID bracelet personalized with their name and seat location, enabling event staff to return lost children to their seats. Wristbands are available for all home games at any Guest Relations location. Please report concerns about a lost child to the nearest Guest Relations location or contact any PNC Park Team Member for assistance.

L

LOST AND FOUND

Lost articles may be turned in at any Guest Relations location during the game. Security will record pertinent information and lost articles will be cataloged and maintained for 30 days. Guests needing assistance in retrieving lost items during non-game hours may call 24-Hour Security at (412) 325-4869.

LOST CHILDREN/MISSING PERSONS

Guests should report any missing persons at any Guest Relations location (See Guest Relations for locations). Guest Relations Team Members will work closely with the PNC Park game day security staff to locate the missing individual(s).

N

NURSING MOTHERS

In partnership with Mamava, PNC Park provides Guests access to clean and comfortable spaces to breastfeed, use a breast pump, or care for young children. There are two nursing areas in PNC Park:

- A nursing pod is located on the riverwalk near the kids play area.
- A nursing room is located in our Guest Relations office at the bottom of the Peoples Home Plate Rotunda.

You can access these spaces through the Mamava app, or by visiting any of our Guest Relations locations.

P

POSTPONED GAMES

The Pirates have the right to postpone the playing of any game at PNC Park. Under the provisions of the Official Playing Rules, the Umpire-in-Chief has the sole and unquestioned authority to determine whether and when play will be halted during a game; whether and when play will be resumed; and whether and when a game will be terminated because of bad weather or unfit playing conditions. The Official Playing Rules provide that when a game is temporarily suspended for rain, umpires must wait 30 minutes before calling the game.

Should there be a second suspension of play, umpires will wait at least 45 minutes before calling a game. For third and any subsequent rain delays umpires are instructed wait at least 30 minutes before calling a game.

If a game is postponed or cancelled, please visit pirates.com/raincheck for information on makeup dates and times as well as ticket exchange policies.

Q

QUIET ROOM

Guests who are in need of a quiet area can visit the Main Guest Relations Office located at the bottom of the Peoples Home Plate Rotunda.

S

SAFETY REGULATIONS

For the comfort and security of all our Guests, we do not allow Guests to enter PNC Park with weapons of any kind, hazardous, and/or disruptive items. Samples of these items that are not permitted in the ballpark include balloons, Bluetooth speaker, drones, fireworks, footballs, Frisbee discs, hoverboards, inflatable balls, laser pointers, motorcycle helmets and weapons of any kind. The Pirates reserve the right to inspect and remove any packages and/or containers.

If a Guest experiences difficulties with other Guest(s) and is in need of assistance or would like to report a safety concern in the ballpark, contact the nearest Team Member or operations personnel.

Also see Security Text and Umbrella Policy

SCOREBOARD MESSAGES

For a $35 donation to Pirates Charities, you can have a personal message displayed on the PNC Park scoreboard. It's a great way to say "Happy Birthday" or "Congratulations!" to your favorite Pirates fan. A maximum of 20 messages are displayed during every home game.
For more information about scoreboard messages, please contact the Scoreboard Message Hotline at (412) 325-4992 or email Piratescharities@pirates.com.

Message forms are also available online at pirates.com/scoreboardmessages.

A service fee will be applied to online orders.

All messages are subject to availability and the Pirates have the right to refuse any request. All donations benefit Pirates Charities.

SECURITY TEXT

If a Guest experiences difficulties with other Guest(s) in the ballpark or is in need of assistance from ballpark operations personnel for any other issue (medical, security, etc.), they are encouraged to use theirmobile phone to anonymously text the word SECURITY and their seat location to 61592. The request will be received by PNC Park security, and the appropriate personnel will be dispatched to the appropriate location to respond to the request, as needed. Standard text messaging rates may apply.

SENSORY INCLUSION

Partnering with Allegheny Health Network and KultureCity, PNC Park is striving to make Pirates games more inclusive and comfortable for Guests with sensory processing needs. Located on our Suite Level in Suite 62, a sensory room is available for all Guests with sensory processing needs. The room contains items such as bubble walls, sensory art panels, sensory touch panels, and bean bags. Guests will be allotted 15 minutes inside the room, and a Pirates team member will be designated to the room to assist with any needs. Please reach out to a Pirates team member if you need assistance in finding the sensory room.

Sensory bags containing fidget toys, noise-cancelling headphones, weighted lap pads, and other sensory resources are available at no charge in the Main Guest Relations Office located at the bottom of the Peoples Home Plate Rotunda. A valid credit card or acceptable form of picture identification, such as a valid driver's license or non-driver government-issued photo ID card, is required as a deposit. Additionally, Pirates team members are trained to recognize opportunities to assist with these Guests' enjoyment of the game.

STROLLERS

PNC Park welcomes Guests that bring and utilize their own strollers however, the use of strollers should not in any way inhibit general Guest movement or block any aisle ways. Strollers are not available to rent. Strollers may be subject to search by game day security staff.

T

"T" SERVICE

FREE "T" service between the Golden Triangle Stations to the North Side Station and between Allegheny Station and the North Side Station. FREE and frequent "T" Service is provided before and after Pirates Events.

"T" SERVICE IS PROVIDED FROM:
- Weekdays from 5:06am to 12:44am
- Saturdays from 5:41am to 12:48am
- Sundays from 5:41am to 11:18pm

TOBACCO POLICY

In consideration of the health and comfort of others, the use of tobacco products of any kind is not permitted anywhere in Park. This policy also applies to e-cigarettes and smokeless tobacco. The Club reserves the right to eject any Guest violating this policy.

U

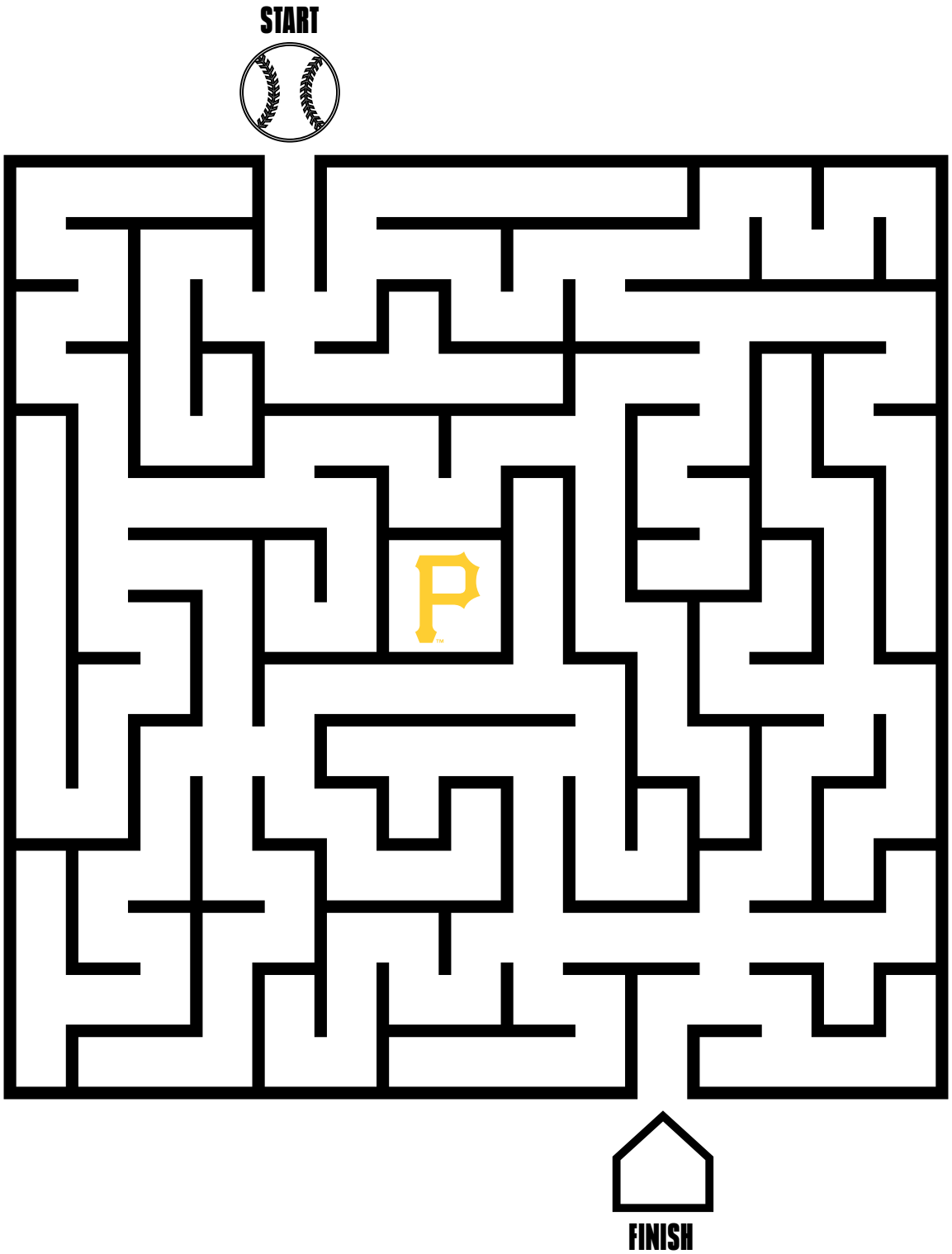
UMBRELLA POLICY

Umbrellas are permitted inside PNC Park. For the safety and viewing enjoyment of all Guests, umbrellas may not be opened during play. Umbrellas may be opened during rain delays.

TO REVIEW THE PIRATES COMPLETE A-Z GUIDE, VISIT PIRATES.COM/A-Z

BASEBALL MAZE

Get the baseball to the base by drawing a path!



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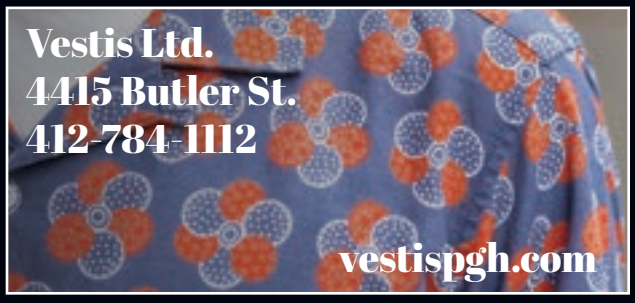

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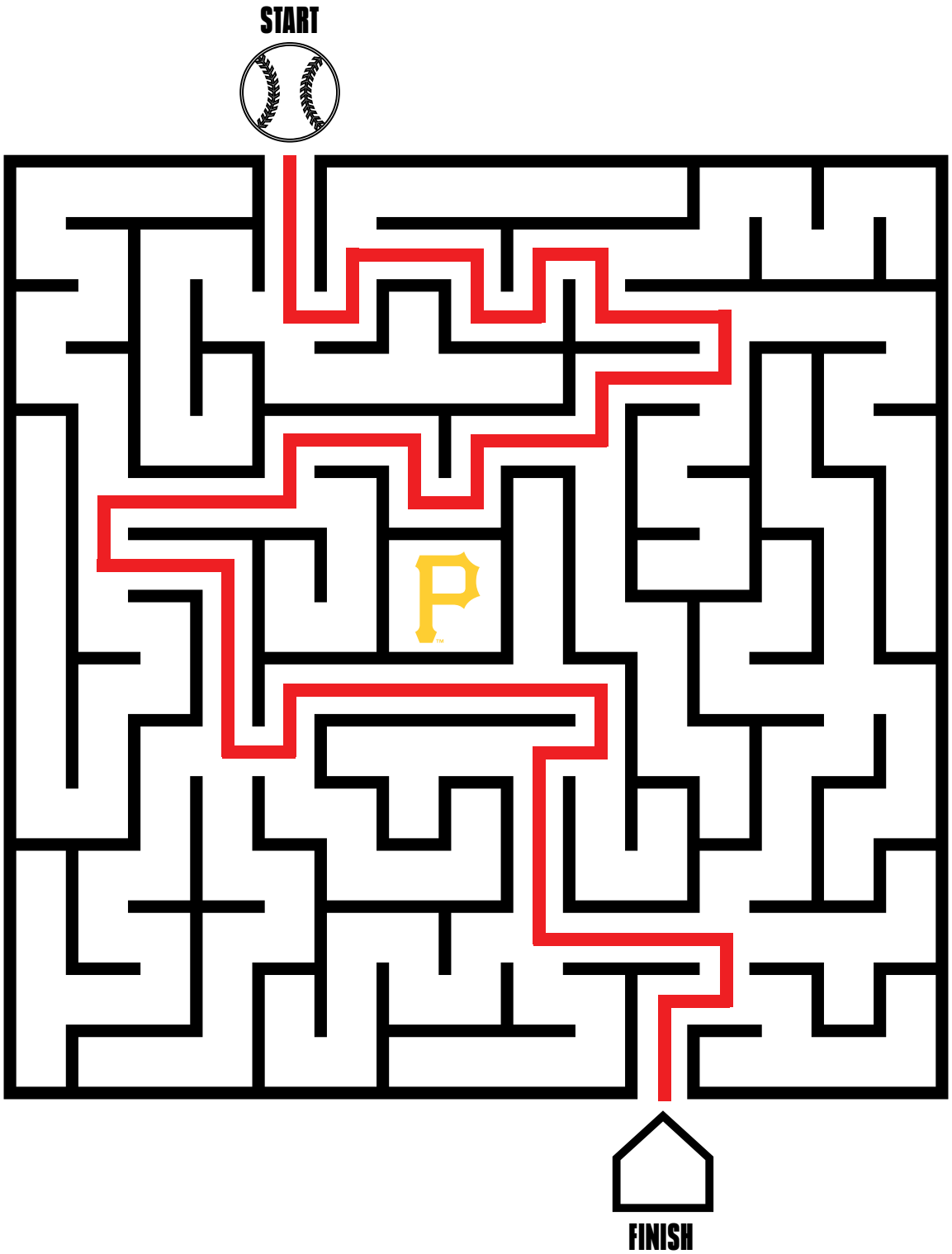

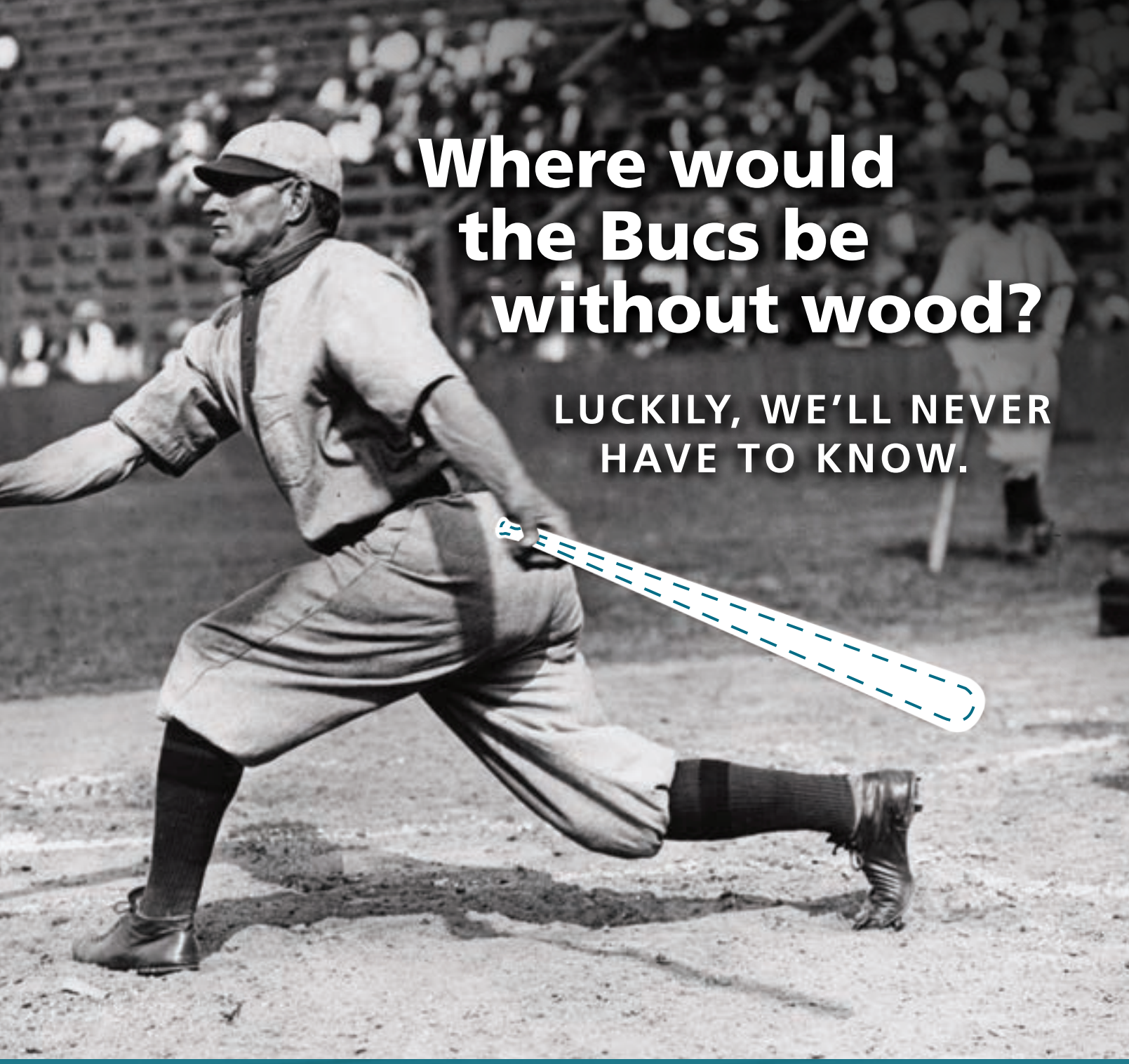

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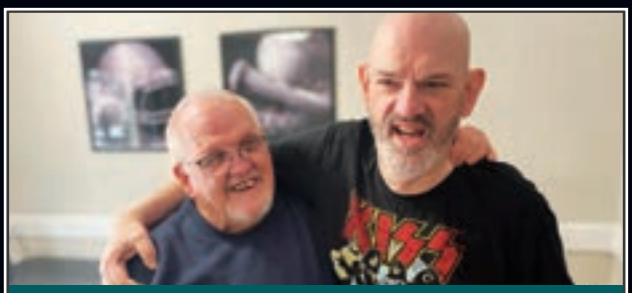

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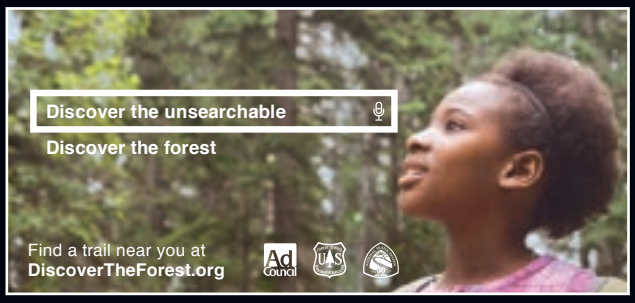

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1. Unless otherwise provided, offers are valid 2/01/2023-12/31/2023. All offers are subject to change without notice. Purchases must be made with your Pittsburgh Pirates PNC Bank Visa® Debit Card.
2. The ticket discount applies only to games played at PNC Park in the Outfield Box, Infield Box, and Grandstand sections. No discount will apply to games played on Saturday or post-season tickets. Discount applies to tickets purchased at the Pirates box office at PNC Park or online at pirates.com/piratescard. Maximum of eight (8) tickets per game per Pirates Debit Cardholder, subject to ticket availability.

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